

PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES,

F R A G M E N T S

OF

AKBUR OF BETLIS.

CONTAINING

R E F L E C T I O N S

ON THE

LAWS, MANNERS, CUSTOMS and RELIGIONS,

OF CERTAIN

ASIATIC, AFRIC, and EUROPEAN NATIONS.

COLLECTED AND NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.

By RICHARD JOSEPH SULIVAN, Esq.

Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica Veritas.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N :

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HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES, AND
THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE PRINCES.

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MAJOR CLAYTON

RICHARD JOHN

VOL. II

FOR THE

THE



Philosophical Rhapsodies.

FRAGMENT XXXII.

I NOW take my leave of the Malays, Siamefe, Cannibals, Ourang - Outangs, and all the other extraordinary creatures we have been looking at — and most cordially welcome you to a country, long famous in the annals of the world, I mean Hindostan.

The people of Hindostan, who are of very great antiquity, as will more fully appear hereafter, deduce their origin, in like manner with most other nations,

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from

from the Sun and Moon. From those planets, they say, they were either dropped, or drawn by them into being. The very word Hindoo signifying, in the Shanferit language, Moon. However this may be, their relationship to the Sun and Moon originally gave them the cast of disposition which leads to the religious system of Sabism; the first, and it may be affirmed, the most predominant religion in the world.

Sabism, or the worship of the stars and planets, if we inquire attentively, we shall find to have been at one time or other, the ruling system of religion of every nation upon earth. Those who live under the Line, are known to adore the Sun, even while he is scorching and tormenting them with his beams. Whither shall unlightened man turn his inquiries, or to what source of existence shall he go, but to that which, to the evidence of his senses,



senses, gives life, light, and animation to all? Without the influence of the Sun, where is fertility or vegetation? The abstract reasoning on unseen causes, and an invisible Providence, is to him ridiculous and absurd. He sees his fields grow green, his harvests ripen, and his flocks to bring forth their offspring, and all from the awful energy of that glorious planet. To the Sun, therefore, man has at all times bowed. Natural reason has always led him to consider it as the real, as it is the apparent, source of every thing beautiful, every thing animated, every thing serviceable to his existence. Till aided by revelation, he could not discover that an all-powerful Creator formed and employed that wondrous orb as a secondary cause in his omniscient government of the universe.

The Hindoos, we have said, deduce their origin from the Sun and Moon: but the Sun and Moon are not allowed to be

their progenitors — and Ham is placed, in the true spirit of contradiction, as the founder of the Hindoo race. From Ham, therefore, according to this doctrine, we must say, proceeded Hind, and from Hind came, in different ramifications, the inhabitants of the Decan, the Mah-rattahs, the Conheries, and the Tilingas. This is, indeed, being brief, and perfectly systematic in the planting of this considerable portion of the East: but I am apprehensive the ground is not so tenable as its supporters would have it.

The Hindoos will not allow themselves to be judged of by a people who can suppose all time to be comprised in five or six thousand years; — a small tract of land to be the nursery of the world; — and the wandering Israelites to be the chosen and the elect of God. These people, as well as the Chinese, lay claim to a very early origin — an origin much earlier than any
in

in the Jewish story. In number they are infinitely superior to those from whom they are declared to have sprung ; and, in the principles of moral rectitude and humanity, they boast an equal virtue with the followers of Moses. — For these reasons, the Hindoos will not allow of the genealogy which is made out for them by the Jews.

Children of Apollo, or Luna, then, or children of the second-born of Noah, it matters not which, the Hindoos have records, in which they place the most implicit belief. The annals of a people, who have for a number of ages fortunately escaped the scourge of persecution, are not only curious in themselves, but they are unquestionably entitled to every mark of respect and veneration which can be paid them. Thousands of years have rolled agreeably to the Hindoo chronology, and

yet no interruption hath occurred to mar their sacred history.

How different this from the fate which attended the ordinances of Moses. From the earliest periods of time the Hindoos have been conversant in the art of writing, and the consequence hath been, their accounts carry at least the appearance of authenticity. But have the writings of the Legislator of the Israelites, say they, met with a similar fate? Certainly not. — On the contrary, it should seem, that the Jews, from the beginning, were unwilling that their laws should be committed to writing. They were content with tradition; and from tradition only could they be taught, till the destruction of Jerusalem, and the consequent dispersion of the chosen seed, rendered the collection of what they called the Talmud necessary. This oral tradition of the Jews (and here we cannot but agree with the

the Hindoos) undoubtedly opened a door to numberless errors, and not to a small degree of extravagance and fable. Nor was it at all mended by the mysterious and occult interpretations of the Rabbins, as given in the Kabala. In short, the Jewish story most certainly encountered dangers and difficulties in its progress, which the Hindoo annals have always escaped.

If, therefore, we implicitly pin our faith on matters of not the clearest evidence, let us at least allow the Hindoos some merit, when they only say, they believe, and nothing farther, in the system of religion which hath been handed down to them from the remotest ages. Simple and unexaggerated accounts, given without any seeming desire of fixing an imposition on the world, are surely well entitled to at least a liberal construction.

FRAGMENT XXXIII.

WHEN, how, or for what purpose this globe was created, are questions that the capacity of man is unequal to the solution of. A divine revelation, as I said before, must come, ere an unenlightened people can fix an æra for the creation. The Hindoo speaks in this manner:— He judges from the regular course of nature. — No mortal, he imagines, could have been present when this planet was formed. Every part of the mighty whole must have been complete, in his conviction, ere man, and other animals, could have been brought into existence. All dates, therefore, of the beginning of the world, appear to him as nothing more than the ingenious positions of conjecture.

Impressed

Impressed with sentiments of this nature, and supported by tradition, and the concurrent testimony of the sages of every age, the Hindoo feels no scruple in smiling at our Mosaical account, and at placing, in opposition to our 6000 years, a period of four joogs, as he calls them, or 7,600,000 years, nearly four hundred thousand of which are as yet to come. He doubts also of our account of the flood. No mention, he says, is made of that universal calamity in his Beids or Shaasta, although the Beids and Shaasta are supposed to have been compiled (according to European computation) either some time before, or immediately at the commencement of the flood.

This is a singular circumstance. The Hindoo records certainly go back as far as that æra; and that so dreadful a chastisement should be unnoticed in them, is a matter not easily accounted for. The
 Brahmins,

Brahmins, indeed, in their expositions of these very records, positively assert, that the deluge, if it ever did take place, was partial — that it extended not so far as Hindostan; and they ground their assertion not only on tradition, but on authentic written accounts. Many other nations of the East hold the same language. This is a tender subject; — I would willingly refrain from it; but it is impossible; — a few words are necessary. The creation and the deluge, the two grand epochs in the Mosaical history of the world, have long engaged the attention of the curious. Infinite learning hath been brought forward to prove the certainty of both, and no pains have been spared in reconciling them to the common apprehensions of mankind. But still there have been sceptics, and those even among Christians, in other respects the most orthodox. Inquiries of this nature, I allow, are wild and unsatisfactory, from
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the impenetrable cloud in which they are involved; but yet they engage an inquisitive mind.

We would search, though we are convinced that the search must be fruitless. One man turns to the annals of the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans — another dives into the histories of Scythia, China, and Hindostan — while another argues on probabilities — and a fourth contents himself (which is perhaps the wisest way of all) with believing the word of Moses, as the immediate declaration of the providence of God.

In fact, when we come seriously to reflect on a creation, we shall find that the whole fabric can rest on nothing more than on an implicit faith. It is contrary to the nature of things to suppose, that men could have been witnesses of it. Previous to their arriving at a state of know-

knowledge and discrimination, the elementary parts of this globe must have betaken themselves to their respective stations. Earth, air, fire, and water, must have been formed; for without the formation of those several elements, where could the children of this world have found life, light, or nourishment?

In reasoning on this subject, some philosophers have gone so far as to suppose two creations, and they ground themselves on arguments ingenious enough: they assert it to be extravagant to suppose, that the God of all eternity should not have created an universe until a few thousand years ago. Man, indeed, they acknowledge, may have been destroyed in the frequent disasters, which it is natural to think this earth hath undergone; but matter and things must have had, they say, an existence greatly antecedent to the time given us of our first parents. In a word,

word, they contend for a previous creation of inanimate nature — then of an animated one — subsequently of a general destruction, as they suppose the flood to have been, from which Adam and Eve, as Noah and his family afterwards, might have escaped ; — and so dragging you on from one conjecture to another, they at length plunge you into a sea of difficulties, where your faculties become bewildered, and then you are at liberty to find your way back as well as you are able. This, in fact, is the case with almost every system, that even the subtlest genius hath been able to produce.

A moderate man, therefore, should rest satisfied with such accounts as come to him from his forefathers : a farther degree of knowledge would be of no advantage. A chronological series of 6000 years is just as much to be depended on, and to all purposes of life is just as useful and instructive,

instructive, as one of as many millions. Let Christians then adhere to their own belief; but let them not scoff at the Hindoo. He thinks himself right; and why should it be their business to prove to him that he is wrong? or to put him out of conceit with the old and established religion of his country.

The mythological system of the Hindoos, a system fraught with charity and benevolence, will not, of course, be found reconcileable to either the Mosaical account of the creation, or of the deluge. We have already mentioned their joogs, and their denial of the universality of the flood; but they yet go farther: they deny the possibility, if the deluge even did take place, of one ark being capable of holding all that it is said to have contained. Admitting, say they, that the waters, as a just judgement from God, did spread themselves over the face of the
earth

earth in the 1656th year of the Christian world, and that “the length of the ark
 “was three hundred cubits, the breadth
 “fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty
 “cubits,” and that it was one hundred
 and twenty years in building, how can it
 be reconciled to common sense, that,
 “besides Noah and his family, two of
 “every living thing should go in, toge-
 “ther with their food?” — Were there
 not elephants, rhinoceroses, camels, and
 all other animals, in those days, as well
 as in these? — Nay, do not the horns,
 bones, teeth, and other exuviae, that we
 see dug up in different parts, prove to us
 to demonstration, that there were even
 larger races of animals formerly, than
 there are at present? And how can we
 credit that story, which says, they crowd-
 ed all into a space inadequate in every re-
 spect to the admission of so numerous a
 host?

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXXIV.

IN this manner the Hindoo supports his ground. Speak to him of faith, he confesses he has it in his own scriptures. Speak to him of the possibility of all things in the hands of Providence, he acknowledges it ; but he cannot reconcile it to himself, why he should relinquish the text of his own Beid and Shaafta, which he believes unsophisticated, for that of the Bible, which he is told is erroneous, and in many parts inconsistent. Reason — common reason is all that he hath to go upon ; and while that does not militate against morality, he most assuredly is entitled to the indulgence of every follower of even the law of Moses.

Revelation

Revelation is the only clue, as we have already repeated, capable of guiding a wanderer through the dark. But, in proportion as the Hindoo is determined, though candid and moderate in his denial of certain points, you may readily conceive how his indignation can effervesce, when he is told, that a certain Academician in the West has laboured to prove the actual existence of a race of giants, who could pile mountains upon mountains, and to whom "the children of Israel appeared
 "as grasshoppers in the field." That he has, with true mathematical exactness, given a scale of their dimensions; and that he concludes his essay with saying,
 "Who can be persuaded that Noah, had
 "he been no bigger than we are, would
 "have been capable of building the ark
 "that saved mankind; — an ark which
 "could not have been capacious enough
 "to contain all the animals he was com-
 "manded to lodge in it, unless the cu-

“bits of scripture be taken for cubits of
 “giants?” And that another, treading in
 the steps of this visionary, has boldly
 ventured to declare, that Adam’s stature
 was one hundred and twenty-three feet
 nine inches; — Eve’s, one hundred and
 eighteen feet nine inches and three quar-
 ters, (exact even to the quarter of an
 inch!) — Noah’s, twenty feet short of
 Adam; — Abraham’s considerably redu-
 ced, not being above twenty-eight feet;
 — Moses, thirteen feet; and Hercules
 no more than ten feet.

I will not pretend to vouch the truth
 of that historical anecdote of a prince of
 the Dynasty of Ghizri, who, in an in-
 cursion into Hindostan, is said to have
 found a stone in a temple, with an in-
 scription on it, which denoted it to be
 upwards of forty thousand years old.
 The identity of the stone may have been
 indeed such as is recorded; but the epoch
 of

of the engraving may very readily be doubted. This, however, as it may. The age of the Hindoo nation is incontrovertibly very great. A history at this day even exists, complete in all its parts, which was composed upwards of two thousand years before the coming of the Messiah, and which treats of the foreign and domestic regulations of the government of Hindostan for several millions of years preceding: and what is more remarkable, it was declaredly compiled for the purpose of investigating the creation, and the progress of man. Nor is this esteemed a record of any great antiquity. They have other annals, they say, of a much older date.

In whatever light then these pretensions of the Hindoos may be considered, and however erroneous we, as Christians, must necessarily hold them to be, they yet give us sufficient evidence to conclude,

that the Hindoos are of higher antiquity than any other nation we read of. They were the first civilised people among whom the arts of mechanism and manufacture flourished, who encouraged the wholesome spirit of commerce, and who formed themselves into an immense community, strictly regular and humanised.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXXV.

THE earliest accounts we have of the Hindoos, are from the Greeks. The Greeks knew them, however, but little. All we can learn from that nation is, that the Hindoos were then supposed a civilised and an ingenious people, but that they leaned considerably to idolatry. Nor has this latter opinion wanted support from more modern nations, who have had the means, could they have prevailed on themselves to have taken the trouble, of inquiry. The simple fact is, both ancients and moderns have been mistaken, who have looked upon the Hindoos as idolators. The very reverse is the case with all their Brahmins, and with all such others, as have allowed themselves

to discriminate between what is intended as a spur, as an incentive to the common people, who are in all countries incapable of deep reflection ; and that which is the genuine practice and belief of the wiser and better sort.

That the Hindoos make use of images is certain ; and that those images, under various names and forms, are strongly indicative of Polytheism, is equally certain. But the truth is, and the Brahmins hesitate not to declare it, that they neither have faith in idols, nor do they believe in a plurality of gods. To amuse the multitude, indeed, who either cannot, or will not think for themselves, they acknowledge, that a little of priestly trick is used in the externals of their religion ; and that to draw and fix that multitude to a reliance on the Divinity, it has been found necessary to tolerate a symbolical worship of the attributes of a God : — A
God,

God, omniscient, omnipotent, and eternal. And they farther confess, that, to prevent a too-scrutinising investigation of the ways and means they have found it expedient to use, a more than ordinary address of imposition hath been played off on the disciples of the Shaastå. The common herd, say they, are not to be trusted with those mysterious points, which are committed only to the elect of Brahma.

Thus, as in all countries, where the priesthood have at any time been paramount, the scriptures (those of the church of Christ not excepted) have been rigidly kept from the searching eye of the laity. I do not mean to investigate the general and particular usages of the Hindoo religion: it would be beyond my reach. Neither shall I pretend to contradict the assertions of those Christian missionaries, who have declared the Brahmins to be believers of a Trinity, a Creator, a Preserver,

server, and a Destroyer. These matters come not within my province. I confine my inquiries to manners, customs, and moral conduct.

The Brahmins, or Priests, who originally framed the theological system of the Hindoos, took especial care that, in the gradations of society, they, as a branch selected and devoted to the service of God, should hold the pre-eminent situation. — “The principle of truth,” say they, “created Burmhà; he afterwards created “the Brahmin from his mouth; the “Chetteree from his arms; the Bice “from his thighs; and the Sooder from “his feet. The first three in regular “gradations of eminence — the latter “to be servants to the whole.” By this division, you see, four great tribes, or casts, were formed, each confined to a certain discipline, purposely adapted, and rigidly enjoined in the fulfilment, by the
most

most awful solemnities of religion. And that no confusion should at any time arise amongst the tribes, it was given as a law never to be deviated from, (excepting on pilgrimages, or at places of public worship, where an unavoidable intermixture could not but take place) that they should not keep company with each other; neither eat, drink, nor intermarry: and farther, the occupations of each cast were settled by these same Brahmins; and it was directed, that every child should follow the profession of his father.

This division, indeed, into distinct classes, and hereditary occupations, is not confined to the Hindoos. The records of other nations afford us proof of a like singularity. The Jews in particular.

“ So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe; for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance

“ tance

“ tance of the tribe of his fathers, and
 “ every daughter shall be wife unto one
 “ of the family of the tribe of her fa-
 “ ther.”

But however consonant to the Jewish ordinances, or however beneficial in some respects to society, the evils attendant on this division of the Hindoos into casts have been manifold. I will only speak of one; it has been a crying one indeed. Probably it may have been a deviation from the original intent — I will vainly hope so. Mankind could never have been so bad, as premeditatedly to have established it from the beginning. I allude to that miserable race of beings, that supposed refuse of all the other tribes of Hindostan, the Pulliyars, or Chummars. It scarce is to be credited, that a humane, a civilised people, such as the Hindoos, that they should deliberately adjudge a wretched number of men to the basest,

the

the vilest offices of society, and that too from their very births. Unaccountable perversion of the human mind! — The mild, the gentle Hindoo dooms the child of the same soil to every menial service that is shocking and disgraceful. He even admits that one of a superior tribe may murder him on the spot, if by accident he shall touch him*. There, as in days of yore, when old Joshua cursed the Gibeonites: “Now, therefore, are ye cursed;” “and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, hewers of wood, and drawers of water.” As I said before, I hope this is a deviation from the

* It is not unworthy of remark here, that the Puliyars on the Malabar side of India, are known to live generally in trees; and that on sight of a Brahmin they are obliged to cry with as audible a voice as in their power, Yahû! Yahû! that no accidental encounter should contaminate the sacred order of Burma. And hence, perhaps, the ground-work of that picture of deformity delineated by Swift in his Gulliver’s voyage to the Houyhnhnms.

original intent. It bears strong marks that it is so, and I rejoice at it, though it affords not a little assistance to that wild paradox, which asserts, that the cultivation of the arts and sciences has been the cause of the unhappy and pernicious inequality which subsists among mankind.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXXVI.

“THE Brahmins, as a branch peculiarly
 “devoted to God, took especial care in the
 “gradations of society, that their tribe
 “should hold a pre-eminent situation.”
 So said I in the last fragment, and so I
 repeat it. Nor can any proof of this be
 stronger than the very spirit and letter of
 those laws which they themselves framed
 for the punishment of those offences.
 “If a man strikes a Brahmin,” says the
 Gentoo code, “with his hand, the ma-
 “gistrate shall cut off that man’s hand.
 “If he strikes him with his foot, the
 “magistrate shall cut off that foot; and
 “in the same manner with whatever
 “limb he strikes a Brahmin, that limb
 “shall be cut off.” But this relates only
 to

to a Chetteree, or a Bice. The Sooder again is in a worse predicament ; for if he, poor fellow ! only “ sits upon the
 “ carpet of a Brahmin, the magistrate,
 “ having thrust a hot iron into his buttock, and branded him, shall banish
 “ him the kingdom, or else shall cut his
 “ buttock off entirely.”

Having gone thus far with respect to offences which may be committed against the sacred character of the Brahmins, their next care was to establish such doctrines as should effectually screen their own fraternity from exemplary punishment. To this end they ordained, that
 “ a Brahmin should not be put to death
 “ upon any account whatever ;” even for theft, “ where the magistrate would
 “ put to death a man of any other cast.” Even for theft so circumstanced, “ a
 “ Brahmin should not be put to death ;
 “ but, according to the nature of his
 “ offence,

“ offence, he should have his effects con-
 “ fiscated, and be banished from the
 “ kingdom; a chain should be fastened
 “ about his leg, and he should be made a
 “ slave; he should be confined in prison
 “ for life; he should have the mark of
 “ the Pudendum Muliebre upon his fore-
 “ head with a hot iron, and be banished
 “ from the kingdom; he should have his
 “ eyes put out, and the hair of his head
 “ should be cut off:” but upon no account
 whatever should he be put to death.

From these established principles in
 the laws of the Hindoos, it is evident
 the Brahmins were from the beginning
 careful that their order should exclusively
 be exempt from all capital coercion. I
 mention it not so much as an extraordi-
 nary trait in the character of these people,
 as that it is an indisputable contradiction
 to the assertion of those writers, who
 say, “ that though the Brahmins were

“ the authors of the laws, it never could
 “ be discovered, that they had screened
 “ themselves from the punishment of
 “ death.”

It is a just, and a generally-received opinion, that the pretensions of any particular order, if not checked in time, must necessarily produce an arrogance of supremacy, and a pride of disposition, which it will be finally difficult to control. The sovereign, left to the guidance of his own will, and unrestrained by law, soon springs into the tyrant. The man of the church, puffed up with pride as the minister of God, binds, fetters, the reason of his flock, and even changes the nature, the essence of common sense. Nobles, again, spurning at royalty, sink into that hydra of despotism, an aristocracy; while a populace, left to themselves, and unrestrained in their career, trample on even the first principles of society;
 drag

drag forth and encourage the grand causes of disorder ; exist but in confusion, and in the destruction of those whom fortune may have placed in a more eminent situation.

From these palpable positions, it is clearly demonstrative, that collateral checks are requisite in every species of government. No one man, or body of men, should be above the wholesome severity of law ; nor should any order, even that, the most sacred, of kings, be unamenable to justice, or independent of those ties which have been the cement of union, and the first causes of their own pre-eminent situation. It is astonishing, however, to what a miserable degree of degeneracy the human mind is capable of declining. As a dog, man would seem more eager to caress the hand that wounds, than the hand that is lenient and befriends him. How common is the state of slavish servitude !

Look round the world — see how many millions are born and bred in indigence and misery ! What are their complaints ? None. Envy they the masters who tyrannise over them, and wallow in riches, the sweat of their unhappy brows ? No. They neither envy nor condemn the affluence of others. In the original distinction of things, they look upon themselves to have been ordained to an inferior state. Those who are more prosperous, they believe to be more entitled to it. They work, they labour for their lords, without repining. Bounded in their views, they desire no better. They even conceive a free people more unhappy than themselves.

We will not here again enter into a discussion of the freedom of man, and of the supposed liberal bent of his natural disposition. It is a knotty subject, abounding in contradiction. We shall, there-

fore, return to the Brahmins of the Hindoos, who, screening themselves from capital punishment, may murder without even the fear of death. What a victory must they have gained over the judgment of mankind, ere they could have established this supremacy! Once acquired, the ground was ever after tenable. How easy to subdue the will of others, when aided by religion, and the sanctity of a holy character! How practicable to influence private families, and even public councils, when once superstition has spread itself abroad!

FRAGMENT XXXVII.

THE Brahmins, from the origin of the Hindoo government, have uniformly maintained a prodigious superiority over all other classes. The sacred character, the exemption from labour, (I allude here to those dedicated to religion, the common herd of Brahmins being trained to all sorts of professions) and the security they have enjoyed, have invariably afforded them leisure to plan, and opportunity to prosecute measures, for the preservation of the rights and exclusive privileges of their order. But, independent of this, the generality of Brahmins are firmly convinced (and nothing so buoying to the human mind) that they are the first in rank of created beings. Did we not
spring

spring from the mouth of the Father? and is not the mouth the channel of communication, the chosen mode whereby wisdom and understanding are diffused to the children of this world? — Proceeding from the mouth, therefore, are we not essentially exalted above all other tribes whatever? Burmha so determined it from the beginning: he ordained it.

But, notwithstanding this divine predilection in their favour — notwithstanding their riches and their great numbers — notwithstanding that infatuation in the other casts, which attributes to an original turn of chance, and not to trick and usurpation, the superiority which the Brahmins claim — notwithstanding all these sureties, they still are obliged, from a necessary precaution, to hold the consciences of all their inferiors in a satisfied and contented state, though at the same

time in their immediate and absolute disposal. How they effect this, is by those common means of ascendancy which priests have evermore employed when they have been admitted temporal as well as spiritual directors.

In every society, in every family, a Brahmin holds the precise situation of a Christian father professor in a Catholic country. He is called the Gowrroo. His functions are to watch over the moral and religious conduct of those who commit themselves to his charge. He is to see that they deviate not from the right road: in short, he is to be their oracle both with regard to the affairs of this world, and to those of the world to come.

Every man of an order that is compelled to support itself by imposition, has a line of discipline and deportment prescribed

prescribed to him. All passions, but those which promise advantage to the confederate body, it is necessary he should stifle in their infancy. In the great drama of life, a part is to be acted. He, therefore, who is tutored best, and who has studied it most, is likely to perform it to the greatest admiration, and so as that the greatest possible benefit shall result to those who are immediately concerned in his success.

We have already said, that the division of classes among the Hindoos was, from the beginning, rendered hereditary; that of the Brahmins pre-eminently so. From this circumstance, as well indeed as from a variety of other matters, touching the Brahminical character, a conjecture may very well be admitted, of the Brahmin and the Levite having formerly borne some affinity to each other. "And the

“priest’s officer shall be theirs for a perpetual statute; and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons.” The Levites, indeed, were not the elect of so civilised, though they were the chosen of a more favoured people. The rules laid down for the two tribes, however, appear to have been essentially the same. To the Levites wine was forbade: wine was forbade to the Brahmins. The contact of uncleanness was declared abomination in the Levites; so was it in the Brahmins: but that which manifests the similitude in the greatest degree, and the real consequence of both, was, that, in like manner with the Levites, “the Brahmins were ordained to assist the magistrate’s judgement in difficult cases.”

At the same time, that in most points the Levitical and Brahminical characters may be supposed the counterparts of each other,

other, there are yet a few distinctions, which, marking the dispositions of the respective nations from which they sprang, evidently shew that the first causes, amongst either a sanguinary or a gentle people, may be intrinsically of the like nature, though different in their effects.

The sacred character of the high priests of Israel, we know, was as firmly established as that of the Brahmins of Hindostan; yet it was not ordained by the laws of Moses, as it was by the laws of Burmha, that “there was no crime in
“the world so great as that of murdering
“a Brahmin. That the magistrate should
“neither desire the death of a Brahmin,
“nor should he cut off his limbs.”—
The views of both were indeed selfish. Both Brahmins and Levites aimed at the uncontrolled rule and direction of the inferior

ferior orders. But yet the persecuting principle of the one, was the principle in most abomination with the other. That which would draw forth fire and sword from the anointed of the Lord to accomplish, would draw forth fire and sword in the Brahmin to prevent. Circumcision or destruction formed the alternative of the one; innovation was that alone which could rouse the other either to wrath or indignation. "We want not," say the Brahmins, "that others should turn proselytes to our form of worship. Let all men adhere to the religion of their fathers. The tolerating spirit that provided for this in our holy laws, effectually debarred our admission even of converts."

In fact, there is a striking resemblance in the features of the Levite and the Brahmin, though there are, it must be confessed,

confessed, some few contradictions. "God, "in times past," says St. Paul, "suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. He that feared the Lord, and worked righteousness, with him was acceptable."

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XXXVIII.

AS the class of the Brahmins is the most exalted, so is it the most learned, and the best informed of the Hindoos. Their charity is great, and their morality, excepting a few deviations, is simply profound. I will not aver that they are either such philosophers, or such wonderful good men in these days, as they are represented to have been several centuries ago: I very much fear they have degenerated; but that they still bear all the visible signs of benevolence and of self-denial is certain. A great deal, however, is cloaked under sanctity, which too frequently is the screen of a multitude of sins.

In

In the course of many years acquaintance with some of the present race of Brahmins in Hindostan, I must acknowledge my disappointment in not having met with one who could in any manner answer the character of the Brachmans, as held out to us by the ancients. What sentiments are put into the mouths of those philosophers during the course of Alexander's expedition ! — " Heaven is to us," (said they) " the noblest spectacle. We " admire, we rejoice at the order, the " œconomy, the regularity of its mo- " tions. We are ravished in contempla- " ting the Sun mounted on his purple " car, and travelling through the realms " of light, till he returns at the end of " the year to the point from which he set " out. From heaven we turn our eyes " to the earth, and behold there the spec- " tacle of nature, whose works appear " lovely, admirable, and incomprehen- " sible. The notes of the birds, the
" mur-

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“ murmuring streams, the flowers, nay,
 “ a single leaf, sufficiently employs our
 “ thoughts, and absorbs our attention.
 “ We warm ourselves in the sun beams :
 “ the dews refresh us. We wash in the
 “ rivers. We eat the herbs and roots
 “ which the field produces. The earth
 “ serves for our bed — Cares never disturb
 “ our sleep. Peace of mind preserves
 “ our thoughts always free. Our inde-
 “ pendency delivers us from fear, and
 “ from subjection of every kind. We
 “ look upon each other as brethren,
 “ whom nature has made equal, (al-
 “ though government finds a necessity
 “ for political distinctions) and as the
 “ children of one Supreme God our fa-
 “ ther, who ought therefore to share
 “ alike the inheritance he has given us.”

“ You know not the one God, who
 “ is,” say these very same Brachmans in
 a letter to Alexander, “ and you adore a
 “ mul-

" multitude of gods that are not. You
 " place many of them in heaven, and
 " yet assign them the direction of several
 " parts of your body. Minerva resides
 " in the brain, as in the seat of wisdom.
 " Juno governs the impetuous motions
 " of the heart. Mercury, your god of
 " eloquence, dwells upon the lips. Her-
 " cules gives force to your limbs. Cupid
 " inspires you with sentiments of tender-
 " ness. Bacchus gives you taste. Your
 " aliments are under the care of Ceres.
 " Venus procures fruitfulness. Jupiter
 " opens the organs of respiration. And
 " Apollo, so famous for his address, con-
 " ducts your fingers in playing on musi-
 " cal instruments.

" What divinities are here ! How nar-
 " row are the bounds of their power,
 " inasmuch, that they either will not,
 " or cannot change their reciprocal func-
 " tions ! Their opposition is manifest,
 " even

“ even from the very worship you pay
 “ them. You must offer a bull to Jupi-
 “ ter; a peacock to Juno; a wild boar
 “ to Mars; a goat to Bacchus; a swan
 “ to Apollo; a deer to Venus; an owl
 “ to Minerva; cakes to Ceres; and ho-
 “ ney to Mercury. Hercules will have
 “ branches of poplar to adorn his statues
 “ and altars. Cupid will have none but
 “ roses.

“ Are such gods as these capable of
 “ promoting human felicity? Speak but
 “ the truth, and you will own, that they
 “ are your own passions canonized. You
 “ may discover yourselves also, in the di-
 “ vinities with which you have filled
 “ your hell. It is easy there to find your
 “ own crimes under honourable symbols.
 “ The Eumenides are your fallacious
 “ thoughts. Tisiphone is the reproach
 “ of a conscience loaded with crimes.
 “ Tantalus, your insatiable covetousness.

“ Cer-

" Cerberus expresses the punishment due
 " to ill speaking. Hydra is your vices
 " reviving as often as they are cut off.
 " Pluto himself, thrown down from hea-
 " ven, teaches that you are degenerated
 " like him, in forgetting that sole Being
 " to whom you owe your origin. O un-
 " fortunate nation, whose religion is your
 " crime while living — your punishment
 " after death !"

FRAGMENT XXXIX.

THE foregoing exposition of the heathen mythology by the Brachmans, requires no glossary. It was pithy if it was given; but I can scarcely conceive it to have been so. It is too glaringly contradictory to the mild and tolerating spirit of the Hindoo ordinances, which peculiarly inculcate the doctrine I have already noticed — “ Let all men adhere to the religion of their fathers.” The story, however, is told us; and though not a very civil one, on the part of the Brachmans, it yet possesses this advantage, that it in some degree accounts for the high encomiums so lavishly heaped by the ancients on that extraordinary tribe of philosophers.

Plutarch

Plutarch, indeed, affords other instances of the free-spoken disposition of those gentlemen. In the midst of the violences that were committed on account of the revolt of the Brachmans, says he, Alexander thought fit to make trial of their boasted wisdom, by ordering ten of them into his presence, whom he commanded to answer such questions as he should propose to them; threatening such as answered amiss, with death, and appointing the eldest of them to be the judge. He asked the first, "Which, in his opinion, " was most numerous, the living or the " dead?" The Brahmin replied, "The " living, for the dead are not." He asked another, "Which of all animals " was the most subtle?" — "That," said the Brahmin, "whatever it be, with " which mankind are not yet acquainted." Of another he demanded, "What the " arguments were by which he persuaded " Sambus to revolt?" — "But one,"

returned the Indian: "I told him he
 " ought either to live free, or to die in
 " the endeavour to do so." Another was
 required to tell him, "Whether night or
 " day was the oldest?" — "Day," an-
 swered the philosopher, "by one day at
 " least." But, perceiving that Alexander
 was not satisfied with this answer, he
 added, "You ought not to wonder, Sir,
 " if strange questions meet with odd re-
 " plies." One of them he asked, "How
 " a man might be exceedingly beloved?"
 His answer was, "If he be very power-
 " ful, and at the same time, be not very
 " much feared." To another this ques-
 tion was proposed: "How shall a man
 " act to be thought a god?" — "Let
 " him do," replied the Brachman, "what
 " by no other man can be done." The
 last of them being asked, "How long a
 " man ought to desire life?" answered,
 "Till death shall become more eligible."

When

When all had answered, Alexander commanded the judge to give sentence. "All I can say," replied the old man, "is, that every man has answered worse than his fellow." — "That is false," said Alexander, "and thou shalt die first, for having passed so foul a sentence." "Not so, Sir," replied the Brahmin very coolly, "if you mean to keep your word, for you said, he should die first who answered worst, which I have not done, because you have not hitherto asked me any question." This pleased the King; and he not only dismissed them without injury, but he gave them considerable presents.

Thus speaks the sagacious Plutarch of a sect of people, whom, perhaps, he never had an opportunity of knowing. They however did exist, and their wisdom might have been great: I cannot doubt it. All

I shall say is, that their descendants, I am afraid, have very much degenerated.

I have already explained the division of classes among the Hindoos. I shall now endeavour to give you an idea of the vulgar Hindoo story of creation, and their notion of the universe. They declare the revelation of it to have come immediately from Brahma (or Burmha) himself. In one Almighty God they incontestably believe. They acknowledge his omnipotence, and say, that from him all things proceeded. They likewise believe in a plurality of worlds. Worlds have arisen, say they — they have flourished — they have been annihilated. Others again have sprung up in their room; or those that have been destroyed have undergone a re-creation.

Learned men tell us, that the Indians believed this planet of ours to have been
a work

a work spun by a spider, and that it is to be destroyed when the work returns into the bowels of that insect. But here they have misunderstood the Indians. The followers of Brahma are much more rational: at least we should say so, as they in fact approach very near to the belief established for Christianity. They never really credited this puerile conceit. If ever used, they used it figuratively. Easterns have always been famed for fanciful expressions.

As Providence, say they, in the Heaven of Heavens, was once contemplating the powers of existence, a thought rushed into his mind of a something beautiful that he should create in likeness to his own image. When, lo! the unsubstantial idea instantly presented itself corporeal, in the shape of a woman. But so sweet an object could not in charity be permitted to exist a solitary being. The

Divinity therefore willed forth a partner of a less lovely shape, but strong, and calculated for labour. Him he called man. To these he conjointly gave a world, which he breathed into existence; together with all that it contained, from the least to the greatest: and from beings, such as these — children of Heaven — sprang the various and innumerable races of mankind.

It is a clear point, from this original creation of male and female, that the Hindoos should suppose polygamy not only unauthorised, but highly criminal: for could it have been in the least reconcileable to the intentions of Providence, the plurality of wives would unquestionably have been given to the first man, who had the mighty business on his hands of beginning the peopling of the world, and not to his descendants, when that very world should be tolerably well stocked. But this

this deviation from pre-established principles has been no more in the Hindoos than what the Jews themselves and others have also been guilty of. Had Adam any other than Eve? yet Moses expressly warranted polygamy to the children of Israel. Even St. Austin admits the practice to have been innocent.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XL.

ONE female to a male, according to the Hindoo account, we see was sufficient in the beginning. A disproportion afterwards became tolerated — for I will not say it was necessary: and woman then despoiled of her right, fell under the subjection and the tyranny of man. Polygamy, however, has not so invariably prevailed among the Hindoos, as it has among other Asiatic nations. Polyandry obtained at one time or other amongst them, as may be collected from their history. I cannot precisely ascertain the exact period at which a plurality of husbands was allowed. Their Shaastas, however, expressly permit it; and that is evidence sufficient of the fact.

This

This extraordinary victory of the female over the male, (and why should not woman have her day as well as man?) spread itself a considerable way. Besides the people of Thibet and Boutân, who retain the practice to this hour, the Giekers, a race of mountaineers on the confines of Cabul and Candahar, and from whom the Affghans, agreeably to Ferishta, are descended, had the custom of polyandry among them. That the practice should be perpetuated, they ordained that infant females should be butchered by their parents in the market place, if there were not those who would immediately purchase or agree to maintain them. But polyandry never exhibited such bloody scenes in Hindostan; nor is a vestige of it now to be met with.

A mind, warped a little by local prejudices, in contemplating these unfair connections, is apt to shudder at polyandry,

dry, while at the same time it will perhaps but faintly condemn polygamy. And why such partiality? Why should man be privileged in a number of wives, and woman be arbitrarily confined to a single husband? If the pre-determined order of nature is to be infringed, in the name of all and every of our common rights, let each sex be indulged in the same uncontrolled liberty of selection. The abomination is not greater on the one side than on the other. The Gieker (who, by the way, is traced from Egypt, the old hive that we have so often mentioned) is not in the eye of reason, whilst simply considered as a polyandryist, a jot less reprehensible than the less hardy, though more luxurious, Hindoo. It is even a doubt with me, if both one and the other are not in their sentiments as delicate, and in their actions as pure and pardonable, as the sticklers for that post-obit ordinance of the Jewish lawgiver,

I

which

which directed that the husband's brother, after the husband's death, should marry the husband's widow, otherwise that the widow should, "in the presence of the
 " elders, loose his shoe from his foot,
 " and spit in his face, for not building
 " up his brother's house."

However this may be, the Hindoos marry whilst very young — sometimes at the age of three or four years — the time agreeably to popular opinion favourable to it, being at the conjunction of the planets Brispit and Soohk, or Jupiter and Venus. They come together even before their childish days are at an end. It has been observed, that children of the torrid zone are remarkably forward, when brought into comparison with those of a colder region. The offspring of the sun can walk at an earlier day than the children of frost and snow can stand alone: their ideas are even quick and penetrating, when
 those

those of northern climes are dull and heavy, and, as it were, intellectually unformed. But this premature growth effectually entails as premature age. The state of puberty soon arrives — grey hairs quickly follow — thirty or forty is as much advanced as sixty is in a climate less debilitating to the human frame.

In treating of the probable effects of the early marriages of Asiatics, it has been generally agreed, that the fine-spun texture of the natives is to be primarily attributed to a too-early cohabitation: for how is it possible, say naturalists, that the embryo can sufficiently be nourished, when the whole aliment is essential to the growth of the mother? or that nature can be supposed to have ordained the offspring to be produced before the parent hath got out of a state of childhood herself? Such reasoning as this, I confess, is plausible; but it will not, I believe, bear

bear the test. Daily observation shews, that the most robust men are born of females still unentitled to the name of women. Hindostan, in the northern parts, admits the proof; Russia confirms it.

The inhabitants of Russia, (for the northern Hindoos lie at too great a distance from Europeans in general to be easily judged of) from their earliest days, accustom themselves to the habit of alternate cold and hot bathing; from the waters of the one plunging into the waters of the other. By this means, and by other artificial helps, the state capable of child-bearing is so anticipated in Russia, that women are known to be mothers at thirteen years of age. The consequence, indeed, is fatal. The excess of premature relaxation which it occasions, engenders a variety of diseases. The organization, even in that bracing climate, becomes enfeebled. Women early begin to feel all
the

the miseries of a worn-out constitution. They even in the prime of years verge towards the tomb. Few of them but pay the tribute of nature long before their dissolution could have been ordained in the common course of things. But still the offspring of such parents are unaffected by this forced, this hot-bed existence. So far from being puny or enfeebled, they bring with them into life the strongest marks of health. Vegetation seems to have commenced, if we should judge from the vigour of their frames, in its most proper season.

But this custom of early marriages, more prevalent among the Hindoos than among the Russians, has not universally been followed by the disciples of the Shaasta. On the island of Ceylon a different practice is observed. Marriages are not only later, but polygamy is under certain restrictions. As the North American

rican with his scalps, so the Ceylonian with the heads of his enemies, pleads the violence of his passion. The slaying an opponent in battle is the first requisite towards an admission into the married state. The door then becomes open; and it is afterwards to rest with himself what number of wives he shall take to his arms. Should he have a mind for fifty, fifty are procurable; but a head must be presented for each. And Saul, when he wished that David should fall by the hands of the Philistines, directed him “to bring, as a dowry, one hundred foreskins of the Philistines;” which, when David had accomplished, Saul bestowed upon him his daughter Michal “in marriage.”

FRAGMENT XLI.

IT is not easily reconcileable to European ideas, that a people boasting of some refinement, as the Hindoos may justly do, should in the most public manner be guilty of every species of indelicacy to their females. Many nations have the custom of immuring their women; but the Hindoos are singular, I think, in the grossness of their ordinances relative to them. “A woman,” say they in their code of laws, “is never satisfied
 “with man — no more than fire is satisfied with burning fuel, or the main
 “ocean with receiving the rivers, or the
 “empire of death with the dying of
 “men and animals. She has six qualities : — the first, an inordinate desire of
 “jewels

“ jewels and fine furniture, handsome
 “ cloaths, and nice victuals; — the se-
 “ cond, immoderate lust; — the third,
 “ violent anger; — the fourth, deep re-
 “ sentment; — the fifth, the good of
 “ others appears evil in her eyes; — the
 “ sixth, she is invariably addicted to bad
 “ actions. For these reasons, it is evi-
 “ dent, the Creator formed her for no
 “ other purpose than that children might
 “ be born from her.” — “ A wife shall
 “ not,” continue they, growing with the
 subject, “ a wife shall not discourse with
 “ a stranger; but she may converse with
 “ a Sinassee, (a wandering priest) a her-
 “ mit, or an old man. She shall not
 “ laugh without drawing the veil before
 “ her face. She shall not eat (unless it
 “ be physic) until she has served her hus-
 “ band and her guests with victuals.
 “ She shall not, while her husband is on
 “ a journey, divert herself by play, nor
 “ shall see any public show, nor shall
 F 2 “ laugh,

“ laugh, nor shall dress herself in jewels
 “ and fine cloaths, nor shall see dancing,
 “ nor hear music, nor shall sit in the
 “ window, nor shall ride out, nor shall
 “ behold any thing rare; but she shall
 “ fasten well the door of the house, and
 “ remain private; and shall not eat any
 “ dainty victuals, and shall not blacken
 “ her eyes with eye powder, and shall
 “ not view her face in a mirror: she shall
 “ never exercise herself in any such agree-
 “ able employment during the absence of
 “ her husband.”

After these tender dogmas with respect
 to unhappy woman — who should be nourished like unto the ewe lamb — who should grow up with her husband and with his children — who should eat of his own meat and drink of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and be unto him as a second daughter: — after these tender dogmas, the hoary-headed Brahmins, whom the
 frost

frost of age must have rendered callous to all the finer dispositions of the soul, in the excess of their wisdom, and parental care, farthermore ordained, "That a man, both night and day, should keep his wife in such subjection, that she should never be the mistress of her own actions; for should she have her will, though sprung from a superior cast, she yet would go astray."

When sentiments, such as these, could prevail, when they could formally be interwoven with the laws of the land, conjecture would naturally lead one to conclude, that the brutal subordination would be carried a step farther; that an absolute authority with respect to the lives of women would have been granted; at least, that the privilege of casting them aside would have been allowed, when no longer captivating, or when the love of variety might

urge their lords to seek enjoyment in the company of others. But the laws of the Brahmins, we will do them justice, have been more generous in this respect. No man is permitted to repudiate his wife at pleasure. Even "should a calamity happen to any person, he may not give away his wife to another man, without that wife's consent: if she is willing, he then, indeed, has power to give her away."

It is somewhat strange, notwithstanding all this severity of disposition, all this contemptuous treatment of the women of Hindostan, that the men are astonishingly constant and faithful to their wives; that the women are remarkably chaste; and that adultery is a crime seldom to be heard of among them. As there is no country, however, where such a general position can unexceptionably be admitted, so in
Hindostan

Hindoſtan it has been ordained, that “ if
 “ the wife of a Brahmin, by her own
 “ conſent, ſhall commit adultery with a
 “ Sooder, the magiſtrate ſhall cut off the
 “ hair of her head, anoint her body with
 “ Ghee, (butter) and cauſe her to be led
 “ through the whole city naked, and
 “ riding upon an afs, and caſt her out on
 “ the north ſide of the city, or cauſe her
 “ to be eaten by dogs.”

“ And it came to paſs about three
 “ months after, that it was told Judah,
 “ ſaying, Tamar thy daughter-in-law
 “ hath played the harlot; and alſo, be-
 “ hold ſhe is with child by whoredom.
 “ And Judah ſaid, bring her forth, and
 “ let her be burnt.” — Genefis. But as
 human nature is every where the ſame,
 and as paſſion is too often paramount to
 reaſon, the intercourſe of the ſexes in
 Hindoſtan is probably as general and as

well understood as in any other part of the world. The blood freezes not in the neighbourhood of the equator. There is a tribe of people in Hindostan, who, in appearance, answer the description of Elijah the Tishbite, “who was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins,” who are prescribed continence and mortification. But I shrewdly suspect these holy men, these Senaffees, or wandering saints, that they do more good towards keeping up the population of the East than the poor husbands imagine, who charitably admit them into their houses. The droves in which they travel through Hindostan are inconceivable:—many thousands of them may be seen at a time, all of them athletic fellows, and none of them over bashful.

I will not repeat to you, what I know you must have heard, of the practice of
 4 the

the Senaffee to leave his slipper or his staff at the door, when he is at prayers with the lady of the house. The fact, however, I believe to be as it is represented; and I believe it to be farthermore expected by these elect of Brahma, that on sight of that signal, the husband is not to interrupt the pair at their devotions. But the Senaffees, though infinitely esteemed, are not exclusively warranted to plume themselves on the favour of the ladies: they have fellow-labourers in the vineyard. There is a cast of people on the Malabar side of India, called Nâïres, who, it is said, are allowed to claim a privilege of gallantry; a privilege superior even to that of the Senaffees; for what the latter procure by stealth and imposition, the Nâïres, insist upon as a right inherent in their tribe*. From these circumstan-

* The Nâïres, of whatever condition, go always bare headed; and as a sign of their superiority and independence, carry a naked broad sword in their hand.

ces, therefore, whatever the tenure by which the intercourse is held, it may naturally be concluded, the Hindoos are not outrageously virtuous; but that the men and women are of much the same complexion with those of other climates.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XLII.

AT our first setting out, you will recollect, we determined on adhering to no certain rule in the nature of our inquiries. It would be too precise a progress for an unpresuming investigation, which aims at nothing but brevity, and a few simple observations. We will pass, therefore, from our last subject, to a momentary consideration of that extravagant enthusiasm and superstition which pervades the minds of the natives of Hindostan. Priest ridden we have already declared them to be : but their infatuated reliance on the wisdom of their Brahmins is singularly astonishing, though it must be confessed it has in many instances been of considerable advantage to them,

We

We have, in a former fragment, taken notice of the influence of the Gourroo in every Hindoo family; we mentioned him as the temporal and the spiritual father. The Gourroo himself, however, is under the positive guidance, as in all similar cases, of certain established rules, which it is peculiarly incumbent on him, in common with his disciples, undeviatingly to adhere to. To enumerate the vast variety of religious rites among the Hindoos, would require volumes. We will pass them over in silence therefore, and confine ourselves to a few of those customs which are the most immediately striking.

Prone to guilt, and apprehensive from nature, man has always had that something within him, which has urged him to penitence, and has given him to believe, that in baptism, or ablution, transgressions may be forgiven. Hence we see the Jews considered baptism, or washing,

as an internal as well as an external purification. Christians even followed the same idea, and, in like manner with their progenitors, baptised not only themselves, but even their goods and chattels. But although water, from its cleansing properties, and fire, from its purifying nature, (which hath also always been used) have both of them been uniformly symbols of expiation; yet we are to look for other more probable reasons for that excessive veneration paid by the followers of Brahma to the Ganges, and to the other sacred rivers of Hindostan.

The Egyptians paid a religious worship to the waters, under the symbol of their god Canopus. The Indians pay a greater — but their adoration is to the element itself. The fertility which rivers occasion in their annual inundations, and that too in countries where grain may be said to be the most essential article of life, must have

have been the original cause which led to river deification. Man, in an uncultivated state of society, evermore acknowledges the Divinity in that which is most beneficial to him.

Filled with the most grateful sensations for the blessings which were regularly dispensed to them in the waters of their rivers — refreshed and cleansed by their invaluable streams — the Hindoos were not long in admitting superstition to substitute itself for gratitude. The foundation once laid, their priests found it no mighty difficulty to rear the superstructure. Ablutions they soon declared necessary, for cleanliness to those in the neighbourhood of rivers — for internal purification to those who might reside at a greater distance. But this was still found inadequate to Brahminical desires. Imposition had gone abroad — The root was deeply taken; and hence the clay even of the
beds

beds of rivers was capable of being turned to tolerable account. The clay, therefore, was brought into use; and it still continues as a most necessary ingredient in many of their religious ceremonies.

The Ganges, as the largest, has always been considered as the most holy river in Hindostan. Those who bathe in it, are peculiarly sanctified ever after; and as a type of it, are marked on the forehead with a yellow mixture. The water itself is sent in jars, sealed by the Brahmins, all over the peninsula of India, and sold at an enormous price. Hindoo princes, living at many thousand miles distance, will drink no other, though the carriage of it costs them prodigious sums of money.

The most extraordinary instance, however, of senseless superstition in the Hindoos,

doos, relative to this element, is in that monstrous, that inhuman custom, of exposing their sick by the sides of rivers, there to die. It is not uncommon for them even to stuff the mouths and nostrils of the diseased with the mud of the banks, (Hindoo extreme unction!) that a speedier period may be put to their existence. But can any thing be more barbarous! Conceive an aged, or an infirm being, borne down to low-water mark on a pallet, probably not bereft of sense or reason, and there left to be washed away by the return of the tide, or to be destroyed by the first ravenous crocodile or tyger! Think not I here exaggerate. The fact is incontestable. I have known instances of it myself. Nay, a very few years only have elapsed since an opulent, and a most reputable Hindoo, at the English settlement of Calcutta in Bengal, was twice rescued from the jaws of death by a gentleman who
was

was his friend, and who forcibly dragged him from his relations, who, at his own express command, had carried him on his funeral bier, and had stretched him out, to await an inevitable death on the shores of the Ganges !

A practice among the Tartars, somewhat similar, and another among the Americans, have already occurred to us. I do not recollect many other such shocking blots in the human character. The Troglodyte, indeed, when either age or infirmities had made life uneasy to him, or when he had become useless to society, seldom declined voluntarily putting an end to his existence ; or if he did, a friend was allowed to whisper to him the law of his tribe which enjoined it. If he then behaved well, the previous omission was forgiven, and his name was enrolled with the rest of his countrymen : but, on the contrary,

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if he hesitated at the blow, the brand of coward was stamped upon his character; he was strangled by his companions, and left by them to rot, with his memory, in infamy and disgrace.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XLIII.

THE Hindoos, though at all times found to be unequal in strength to their invaders, have yet very rarely manifested any other than a spirited and determined disposition. They are, individually, a brave and courageous people. Want of discipline alone hath caused them to fall an easy prey to their conquerors. In almost every page of the earlier periods of the history of Hindostan, even in our own times, many dreadful instances are to be found recorded, of the unqualified alternative of the Hindoos to live in freedom, or to perish.

Sultan Baber, in the 934th year of the Higeira, or 1527th of the Christian æra,

having besieged Medini Rai, a Hindoo chief, in his fortress of Chindery, the Rajahputes made several desperate sallies; but finding every thing in vain, a party of them placed a sword in the hands of one of their principal officers; (first having murdered their wives and children) beseeched him to reward their faithful services, and attachment to their chief, with death: bent out their necks before him to receive the blow, and even contended who should have the honour of being first slain: whilst the rest, actuated by a more glorious principle of active courage, disdainung unrevenged, deliberate slaughter, and panting with the thirst of blood for blood, determined on the last bold effort of despair, the ceremony of the Joar. To this end, they put on their choicest garments, sprinkled themselves with yellow powder, as is the custom at their festivals; then casting loose their hair, and devoting themselves to death,

rushed

rushed among the foe, and there, dealing out destruction, met with that fate which every man courted as he would have courted a crown of glory. The female sex, even in Hindostan, have often exhibited the most striking proofs of resolution. In the reign of Akbar, who died A. C. 1605, a body of his troops invaded the dominions of a certain Hindoo Queen, who had shaken off her obedience. The Queen, informed of his approach, assembled her army, mounted the royal elephant herself, and, with a spear in one hand, and a bow and arrow in the other, led on the troops to action. The conflict was bloody — Repeated shouts of victory were heard — Her troops, at length, gave way — and she, in attempting to rally them, received an arrow in her eye. She still, however, persevered — she strove to extricate the arrow from the wound, but all in vain — it remained immoveable, till one excruciating effort, when the steel

part broke off and remained behind. Nor was this enough — a second arrow pierced her neck. — Now she fainted. — Unanimated by so heroic an example, her forces still retreated. Even her elephant driver endeavoured to carry her from the field. But, quickly recovering from her paroxysm, she saw the misery of her situation. Flight, to a soul like her's, was disgraceful — she disdained the thought. With a few collected followers, therefore, not amounting to above three hundred, she made another stand. Here again she was discomfited — her people began to disperse, and the enemy were surrounding her apace. In this extremity, nothing remained but death. “Come, my brave friend,” said she to an officer who had gallantly fought by her side, “come, strike the blow, and save your mistress from the hands of her enemies.” The officer was silent — he cast his eyes on the ground — he wished to approve himself faithful

faithful as he had ever been; but his heart failed him. He, for once, became a coward, and disobeyed the orders of his sovereign. Still she implored — still she commanded. He could answer only by tears. Seeing all hope at an end, therefore, and that in herself alone she was to seek relief — “Here, then,” said she, “here, then, is my comfort; — Now, Akbar, I defy thee.” So saying, she plunged a dagger in her bosom, and expired at the instant.

It would be unnecessary after this, to adduce any stronger instances of an heroic and martial disposition in the natives of Hindostan. Many, however, are on record: and though the names of such are at present unknown, and especially although the instances of female dignity are yet uncelebrated, whilst the feats of a Cleopatra and a Zenobia, characters infinitely less brilliant, are trumpeted forth

both by poets and historians, the time will come, I hope, when the scale of renown will be enlarged, by the anecdotes of celebrated women of Hindostan*.

On the actuating principles of this Asiatic resolution, I shall have something farther to offer in a subsequent fragment. For the present, I shall content myself with affirming, that both males and females in India afford the most striking examples of determined and invincible courage; and with just venturing a tribute of praise to the less hardy sex, by recoun-

* Within very few years past, the Ranny, or wife, of the rebel Fatty Saw, being separated from her husband by the English troops, which she was under the necessity of passing to join him, put a box of gunpowder in her covered litter, and, taking a taper in her hand, resolutely passed the English army, determined to set fire to it and destroy herself, should she meet with any insult, or should she see the prospect of falling into the hands of the English. Luckily she was not molested — She reached her husband in safety.

ting

ting a story of Plutarch's, relating to another country indeed, but which has served, with a multitude of others, to fix me in the belief — a belief, I know, sneered at by many — that females in all parts of the world have had, and still do possess, as great and exalted ideas of honour as men, however extolled and praised by the labours and industry of each other. "The Phocensians," relates this amiable moralist, "being reduced to the last extremity by the Thessalians, and disdaining to submit to them, Daiphantus proposed that a large pile should be erected, of combustible matter, upon which they should place their wives, children, and their whole substance, that in case of defeat, all should be consumed, and nothing fall into the hands of their enemies. The women, upon this, were consulted — they hesitated not: they assented unanimously." The consequence may be supposed. The Phocensians, animated

mated by despair, regained their ground, and, in the end, conquered. To commemorate this, a solemn festival was instituted to the honour of the Phœcenian ladies.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XLIV.

ONE primary cause of the Hindoos' contempt of death, is the prevalency of the doctrine of a transmigration of souls. They are the original propounders of the metempsychosis—that system so universally well known in Europe under the name of the Pythagorean. It has often amazed the curious, that before the immortality of the soul came thoroughly to be understood, the world in general did not invariably believe in the constant corporeal change of the various constituent parts of nature. How awful is the contemplation of that regular progression of life and death! Vegetables, we see, in their destruction, are the causes of animal existence. Animals, again, in their dissolution,

92 PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES.

lution, become the springs of vegetable life. Insects, flies, and various reptiles, serve the purposes of nourishment to those of a superior degree. Man, again, draws these aside, and appropriates them to his own immediate use; whilst he, as the last and grandest link of the chain, moulders at length away, and, in yielding his fair form, the image of his maker, pays, as a debt, that sacrifice which is essential in common with the rest of things.

The Hindoos, though they believe in the transmigration of souls, do not rank those incomprehensible essences exactly as Plato did, who said, “that at going out
“ of the bodies they had informed, there
“ were three sorts — the incurable, the
“ curable, and the pure.” That the first went to the devil, as we should say, at once; that transmigration was to serve the purposes of the second, as purgatory does the Roman Catholics; but that the
third,

third, being purified previous to death, would stand in need of no farther trial. The Hindoos, I suspect, admit of an inevitable transmigration for a certain number of years, the time being squared to the extent and nature of their worldly crimes. The provision made for this transmigration is curious. Tavernier says, the reason given him by two merchants for burying their money and jewels, part of the latter of which he had purchased, was, the apprehension they laboured under of being poor and miserable in their next change of nature; wherefore it appeared to them but right, as such a state of indigence was possible, that a little stock should be gathered in before hand, in case of exigencies. And apocryphal as this may sound, I can readily believe the fact; for, to this hour, it is the universal practice of the Hindoos to conceal a considerable portion of their treasures.

It

It is of singular consideration, however, that the same principle which actuates them to a contempt of death, as relative to themselves, should at the same time, from the belief that they are to occupy the bodies of other animals, occasion their greatest abhorrence of shedding the blood of any other creature. Thousands and ten thousands of the more rigid ones will perish rather than partake of food which once had existence in it ; though, at the same time, as is instanced in the Mah-rattahs, they will plunder and lay desolate countries, and will murder and destroy their enemies with the most heartfelt alacrity and satisfaction. It is not unusual, extraordinary as it may appear to you, to see hospitals erected for the admission of diseased animals and birds. “ I have seen many camels, horses, and “ bullocks,” says Thevenot, “ with “ other wounded animals, which the “ Hindoos had purchased from Chris-

“ tians and Mohammedans, and which
 “ they had delivered,” as they were wont
 to say, “ from the cruelty of infidels.”

From this principle of transmigration
 arose the excessive veneration paid by the
 Hindoos to the animal of the cow species :
 but good sense had not a little share in
 the predilection. They easily perceived
 that milk was not produced in such abun-
 dance by any other animal ; nor could it
 yield an equal degree of nourishment.
 They saw likewise that the male was
 both patient and docile, pliant to the yoke,
 and well calculated for labour. Nor could
 they but observe it was the animal which
 most generally abounded, of all that comes
 under the denomination of ruminant :
 hence their extraordinary attachment to
 the cow species. They consider the
 milk as a primary article of life, nor
 will they refuse to share it with an infi-
 del ; but they shudder at a calf or a
 bullock's

bullock's being slain. Their intercession for them, when those of another persuasion would lead them to the slaughter, is never omitted. "And thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth over the corn," saith the Mosaic scripture, and so saith the Hindoo, which positively enjoins an attention to that grateful principle. The Hindoos muzzle not the ox — they let him quietly tread out the grain, as the Israelites used to do of old.

Unworthy he to reap the fertile field,
 Whose soul to pity's gen'rous feelings steel'd,
 Aims, with ungrateful hand, the murd'rous stroke
 To fell his ox, just recent from the yoke ;
 The patient partner of his daily toil,
 Who many a year has plough'd the stubborn soil.

The doctrine of Pythagoras, as given to us by Ovid.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XLV.

MEN, once firmly rooted in the belief of a transmigration of that subtle spirit which animates the human frame, and which they denominate the soul, naturally become anxious that its delivery from the body shall be as little incumbered with the groffer element of matter as possible; wherefore it is observed, especially among the Hindoos, that the corporeal parts of the dead are immediately burnt.

Burning is unquestionably the cleanliest, as it is the least offensive method of disposing of a substance sunk into putrescency: and under the influence of this opinion, (for the Hindoos carry it so far

as to perform the ceremony, if possible, on the banks of some holy river, or on the shores of the sea, where they have the ready means of washing the deceased) as much as from the belief that the soul does not escape until the body is perished, they must have originally proceeded, when they ordained, that, excepting a Brahmin or a religious, (who are peculiarly favoured) all bodies should be consumed by fire.

A deviation from this custom has been observed among a few of the tribes of Hind: some of whom are buried, seated in an erect posture in a conical grave, with a profusion of rice, salt, and all sorts of viands, for their future nourishment. But the practice of the people of Ceylon, as mentioned by a Mohammedan writer of the ninth century, is still more extraordinary, at the same time that it exhibits, it must be acknowledged, some barbarous

barbarous traits of wisdom in that people.
 " When a king dies in the island of Se-
 " rendib or Ceylon," says this writer,
 " they lay his body in an open carriage,
 " in such a manner, that his head hangs
 " backwards until it almost touches the
 " ground, and his hair is upon the earth;
 " and this carriage is followed by a wo-
 " man with a broom in her hand, there-
 " with to sweep dust on the face of the
 " deceased, while she cries out with a
 " loud voice — O man! behold your
 " king, who was yesterday your master;
 " but now the empire he exercised over
 " you is vanished and gone; he is redu-
 " ced to the state you behold, having
 " left the world; and the arbiter of
 " death hath withdrawn his soul. Rec-
 " kon, therefore, no more upon the un-
 " certain hopes of life. The body then
 " is burnt."

100 PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES

Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?
 What tho' we wade in wealth, or soar in fame?
 Earth's highest station ends in "Here he lies,"
 And "Dust to dust" concludes her noblest song.

YOUNG.

The Hindoos, in despair, in revenge,
 in a patriotic regard to their religion, and
 to their laws, will not unfrequently de-
 vote themselves to death; but it has not
 come within my knowledge, that they
 are in any great degree addicted to (what
 the moderns call cowardice, but what
 the ancients termed bravery) the act of
 suicide. Men very seldom destroy them-
 selves in Hindostan. Much less do we
 hear of public sacrifices in the pompous
 style that Calanus the Brachman is repre-
 sented to have anticipated his dissolution
 in the days of Alexander. "When that
 " prince saw that the Brachman's resolu-
 " tion was not to be altered, he gave in-
 " structions for performing his request,
 " and committed the care of erecting the
 " funeral

“ funeral pile to Ptolemy, the son of
 “ Lagus, who was afterwards king of
 “ Egypt. When all things were ready,
 “ the king gave orders that Calanus
 “ should be preceded by his guards of
 “ horse and foot, and caused not only
 “ spices and perfumes to be scattered on
 “ the pile, but likewise directed it to be
 “ adorned with several gold and silver
 “ vessels. Calanus, being very weak
 “ and sickly, was brought to the pile on
 “ horseback with all imaginable splendor :
 “ but, before he mounted it, he bestowed
 “ the horse the king had given him upon
 “ Lyfimachus, who had been his con-
 “ stant disciple, and in like manner dis-
 “ tributed all the gold and silver plate
 “ among his friends. Then, singing
 “ hymns of praise to God for the bles-
 “ sings bestowed upon him, he mounted
 “ the pile, and, having decently com-
 “ posed himself on the bed which lay on

“ the top of it, he continued unmoved,
“ and without varying his posture when
“ the fire reached him, and so was con-
“ fumed in the sight of the whole army.”

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XLVI.

WE have hitherto expatiated on the Hindoo institutions with some degree of satisfaction. We now come to a custom which partakes of so great a degree of barbarity, that it is scarcely to be paralleled in the vilest periods of the history of mankind — I mean the sacrifice of wives to the manes of their husbands. The reasons assigned by writers on this subject are manifold. Some ascribe it to the hopes of avoiding, by the merit of that kind of death, the transmigrating into the bodies of other animals, thereby leaving the soul free to enter again into the world, with those of their husbands,

in a happy condition, and in a human shape. Others say it proceeded from a precaution against wives poisoning their husbands. There are those who attribute it to a sense of honour and conjugal attachment. The law and the Brahmins, say they, tell her she shall be happy with her husband hereafter; besides which, there is a disgrace in surviving him; for she is condemned to perpetual widowhood, and, from mistress of the family, is degraded to the state of a menial servant. Others, again, positively pronounce that the custom of women burning themselves with their husbands was never reckoned a religious duty, as hath been erroneously supposed in the West; whilst some of a later date believe that the custom really prevails, but that it proceeded from an excess of fondness in the first Brahmins for their wives, and an anxious desire not to be separated from them longer than it should

should be in their power to follow them, with proper solemnity, to another world.

But all these opinions, excepting that of the apprehension of poison, carry on the very face of them the most evident marks of extravagance. Fear, indeed, might have led in that, as in other instances, to the most horrid lengths. But whence the usage took its rise, dreadful as it is! as it now can only be guessed at, is not worthy of disquisition — suffice it, the detestable murder is enjoined and sanctified by religion.

Bloody sacrifices have, at one time or other, been prevalent in almost every country in the world. The laws of the ruler of the Israelites, together with those of every people of even the highest antiquity, teem with them. All nations have offered up victims at the altars of their gods.

gods. Animals of the brute creation sufficed at first. Superstition at length kindled a fire for the mangled and distorted limbs of the human species. But how merciful the custom which only destroyed a few, compared to the ordinances in the laws of the disciples of Burmha! "It is proper for a woman, after her husband's death, to burn herself in the fire with his corps." Thus spoke the priests of Burmha; thus spoke the Hindoo lawgivers to their followers. In one word, sealing the doom of one half of the race of man. Vain is it for the admirers of the Hindoo character to say, an alternative is left. The tenet, it is true, continues, "If she cannot burn, she must in that case preserve an inviolable chastity — preserving that, she goes to paradise — not preserving it, she goes to hell." This, I acknowledge, is the continuation of the law: but the fact

fact is, and I take the aid of the able translator of the Hindoo code to my support, "the Brahmins look upon this sacrifice as one of the first principles of their religion; the cause of which it would be hardly orthodox to investigate."

Convinced then, as from these circumstances we must be, that even in the last act of nature, unhappy woman is in the most cruel manner tyrannised over by these, in the present instance, bloody children of Moloch; and that if the practice has fallen into disuse, it has been occasioned by Mohammedan and Christian interference, I shall pass from the infernal sentence, and, with an aching heart, will transcribe for you the accounts given us by eye-witnesses of the dreadful ceremony of the execution. As soon as the husband is dead, the wife shuts herself up
to

to bemoan his loss; cuts off her hair, and disrobes herself of all the jewels her husband had given her at their marriage. There she continues till the day of her dissolution arrives: she then decks herself in her gayest ornaments, following the body of her husband, while the Brahmins and spectators chaunt forth songs of immortal glory to her, till they come to the river or reservoir of water where the corps is to be washed. At this place she retires with her female relations, amongst whom are her mother and sisters (if she has any) and some Brahmins, with whom she prays. She then takes off her bracelets, ear-rings, and other jewels, and distributes them as dying testimonials of affection. This being done, and the pile ready, she, with a steady and majestic countenance, walks three times round the pile, the Brahmins reading select parts of the Shaastra to her. She then
takes

takes leave of her parents, companions, and friends; and, having received a lighted wicker of cotton in her hand, she blesses the Brahmins and others, who fall at her feet, and retire weeping. Then ascending the pile, she stops and makes a profound reverence at the feet of the deceased, and thence walking to his head, she seats herself down in a little wicker shed, and, in silent meditation, dwells upon his countenance. This done, she sets fire to the pile herself, and, in the midst of noise and clamour, purposely continued, to prevent her shrieks from being heard, she remains immoveable, till, surrounded with the flames, she is suffocated and consumed; her parents, friends, and Brahmins, constantly replenishing the fire with pots of oil and other combustibles.

Other women bury themselves alive with their husbands. In short, women have

have been known to dash their brains out against walls, or otherways to destroy themselves, when prevented from this melancholy trial of their fortitude. Shall I proceed? Your tears, my fair readers, tell me, Let the veil drop here.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XLVII.

WERE it not an old story, and one with which the world hath been intimately acquainted for almost eighteen hundred years past, I would here comment a little on the conduct of Dido, and make it appear, perhaps not unlikely, that the Mantuan Swain took his idea of a burning sacrifice to the manes of a husband, from Asiatic, and not from Tyrian or Phœnician usage. But as a great deal hath already been written on the subject, I shall wave an inquiry into it on the present occasion, and, instead of a matter of such doubtful nature, just call to your remembrance a custom, as related, of a tribe of the Americans, which is the only one that I can recollect of a modern people, that na-
tionally

tionally comes into comparison with that of the Hindoos.

Among the Natchez, formerly a powerful tribe, but now extinct, (having been extirpated by the Europeans) the great chief, in whom the supreme authority was lodged, was considered as a Being of a superior nature, and the brother of the Sun. His will was a law, to which all submitted with implicit obedience. Neither did the dominion of the chiefs end with their lives; their principal officers, their favourite wives, together with many domestics of inferior rank, were sacrificed at their tombs, in the persuasion that they might, by this means, be attended in the next world by the same persons who had served them in this. And such was the reverence in which the chiefs were held, that those victims welcomed death with exultation, deeming it a recompence of their fidelity, and a mark of distinction,

when

when thus chosen to accompany their deceased masters.

This custom of the Natchez was unquestionably as inhuman as that of the Hindoos; but then it had this to be said for it, that none but the great chiefs' wives and attendants were to be sacrificed, the wives of men of an inferior rank being excluded from that honour; excepting indeed, and which is still more in its favour, the husbands of the daughters of the Sun, who, in like manner with the chiefs' wives, (and I admire them for their impartiality) were to be offered up at the graves of their heaven-descended consorts.

The superstition that breeds one error will engender millions. The Hindoos are a bigoted race, and from that bigotry (for in other respects they are a mild, humane, obedient, and industrious people)

hath proceeded the prevalency of that bloody doctrine which hath just fallen under our consideration. From the same source likewise hath arisen their belief of the infallibility of trial by ordeal — a belief, by the way, not peculiar to the followers of Brahma. The various modes of this irrational test are as distinctly marked in Hindostan as they heretofore were in the several countries of Europe. Boiling water, boiling oil, red-hot iron, &c. each has its particular quality of sense inherent, and not to be appealed from. One decides on theft — another on false testimony — a third on supernatural dealings — and so on. All of them, how ridiculous soever it may seem, are looked upon as the visible means by which God pronounces judgement of acquittal or condemnation on those who are brought to so awful and so hallowed a tribunal of justice. They attend likewise to the flight
of

of birds, and to the movements of wild animals. If a jackal crosses their road, they frequently turn about, and defer their journey, considering it as an inauspicious omen. The science of prediction from the passage of birds is called Shogoon.

We will, however, quit these more distorted features of the Hindoo character, and advert to others, which exhibit traits of an unquestionable morality, and of a more general benevolence and good will. Christians, in forming their opinions of those whom they stigmatise with the name of idolaters, too frequently admit an indiscriminate prejudice to bias their more charitable reason. By prejudiced people the heathen is generally devoted to perdition. Humanity, indeed, sometimes steps in, and, as a mighty concession, gives to the Pagan a midway rank, perhaps, between man and beast. But even this has not

been a general indulgence. Too often he has been doomed to persecution — too often to slaughter — when virtues, perhaps, paramount to vices might have been discerned, had his disposition been thoroughly examined.

Blush, ye mistaken zealots! Blush! The doctrine of your faith points out to you another road! Even the idolater himself affords you an example worthy of imitation. Instruct, if you wish for converts, but do not destroy. Let it not be said o'er a wretch's grave, he's gone,

“ With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;

“ And how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven,

“ But in each circumstance, and course of thought,

“ 'Tis heavy with him?”

SHAKESPEARE.

In treating of the Hindoos, I think I may venture to say, that I have “ nought
“ extenuated,

“extenuated, nor set down aught in ma-
 “lice.” I have spoken of them as they have
 long been known, and as they are at this
 hour to be found. The compound of their
 character is remarkable. No people ever
 blended more opposite extremes. How
 strangely contradictory, for instance, does
 it seem, that the same laws which
 ordain the death of wives on the funeral
 pile of their husbands, should at the same
 time provide, that “the magistrate shall
 “not make war with any deceitful ma-
 “chine, or with poisoned weapons, or
 “with cannon and guns, or any other
 “kind of fire arms; nor shall he slay in
 “war a person born an eunuch, nor any
 “person who, putting his hands together,
 “supplicates for quarter, nor any person
 “who has no means to escape, nor any
 “man who is sitting down, nor any man
 “who says, I am become of your party;
 “nor any man who is asleep, nor any

“ man who is naked, nor any person who
 “ is not employed in war, nor any person
 “ who is come to see the battle, nor any
 “ person who is fighting with another,
 “ nor any person whose weapons are bro-
 “ ken, nor any person who is wounded,
 “ nor any person who is fearful of the
 “ fight, nor any person who runs away
 “ from the battle.” How inconsistent, I
 say, must those principles have been, on
 which these so very opposite laws could
 have been founded !

The art of war in Europe, until very
 lately, gave not such striking instances of
 pre-established forbearance and humanity.
 Among the ancients, as Grotius observes,
 those did not always find mercy who sur-
 rendered without condition, but were often
 slain ; as the princes of Pometia by the
 Romans, the Samnites by Sylla, and Ver-
 cingetorix by Cæsar. Nay, it was almost
 the

the constant custom of the Romans, on the days of their triumph, to put to death the commander of the enemy, as Cicero tells us in his fifth oration against Verres. Tacitus tells us also, that Galba caused the tenth man to be killed of those whom, upon submission, he had received to mercy. But if we go a little farther back, and look at the Jews, what a bloody picture do they present to us! "And they took
 " all the cities, and they utterly destroy-
 " ed all the men, children, and little
 " ones; and so the Israelites shewed them
 " no mercy, and left none to remain."
 O! humanity, humanity, wert thou of the seed of Abraham?

It has not been owing either to inefficient rules, or to written institutes, too often thrown aside as useless, that the Hindoos have confined their benevolent regard to their fellow creatures. Numerous in-

stances might be produced, if necessary, of their having acted, in the hour of need, with all the philanthropy of those ordinances I have just selected.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XLVIII.

“AND the good Samaritan went to
 “ him, and bound up his wounds, pour-
 “ ing in oil and wine, and sat him on his
 “ own beast, and brought him to an inn,
 “ and took care of him.” Thus read we
 in that animated parable of the traveller
 going from Jerusalem. That benevolence,
 however, which warmed the heart of the
 good Samaritan, is related to us as a praise-
 worthy, but at the same time as an extra-
 ordinary instance of charity; it is noticed
 as an amiable contrast to the unfeeling car-
 riage of the Levite and the priest. If,
 therefore, the mind experiences a tender
 and a pleasing sensation when it reflects on
 this declaredly - accidental circumstance,
 how much more exquisite must its feelings
 be,

be, when it is made acquainted with the Hindoo institute, which says, “ If a person going on a journey takes another with him, and this person shall fall sick upon the road, or is unable to travel on account of fatigue, in that case, the person who took him shall remain three days upon the spot in waiting for him. If he does not thus wait for him, the magistrate shall fine him.”

I am aware it can be urged, that the penalties adjudged against the violation of this, and almost all the laws of the Hindoos, are in general pecuniary. They undoubtedly are so, and of course occasion considerable abuse. Fortune and situation put some men, it is certain, beyond every apprehension of the coercive hand of justice. Specific punishments should, no doubt, be allotted to specific offences. The scale should be as exact as possible; and in an equal degree with the care of wisdom

wisdom to discriminate, and equitably to apportion the penalty to the transgression; so should it be sedulous to prevent what, on many occasions, might establish an unwholesome commerce between the criminal and the law. Great men, and men of wealth, should not be possessed of the means of insuring to themselves a virtual impunity, while the humble and the indigent are plunged into ruin, perhaps, for actions of not a more atrocious dye. In this respect I will acknowledge the Hindoo jurisprudence is defective — it leaves the door open for the opulent culprit, but shuts it in the face of the needy and the distressed. But we are to take these laws as they were promulgated some thousand years ago. The Hindoos are not the children of to-day: they are both aged and obstinate. Could we look upon them, indeed, in any other light, we should expect another principle of action, or at least should soon hope to see those errors rectified,

fied, to which nothing but great antiquity can possibly reconcile them.

I would now enumerate to you some of the crimes and punishments of the Hindoos, which might be thought extraordinary and uncommon; but that the records of your own country afford as ludicrous a crop as those of any other nation whatsoever. Neither Hindoo nor Antipodean annals ever furnished a much more ridiculous or perverted comedy of justice, than what we are told of in your Welsh laws. That they adjudged a fine of one hundred and eighty-nine cows for killing a chancellor; for killing the queen's cat, as much wheat as would cover her, when suspended by the tail; for a perjury, three cows; for the rape of a maid, twelve cows; and for the rape of a matron, eighteen.

The natives of Hindostan, who have uniformly exhibited a peculiar character,
and

and who most probably will continue so to do until the end of time, have a people among them, inhabitants of almost impenetrable woods, who are under the absolute direction of their own chieftains, and who, in times of peace, are professionally robbers, but, in times of war, are the guardians of the country. The general name of these people is Polygar. Their original institution, for they live in distinct clans, is not very well understood. It probably took its rise from municipal regulations, relative to the destruction of tygers and other ferocious beasts. Certain tracts of woodland were indisputably allotted as rewards to those who should slay a certain number of those animals; and those lands approximating, probably laid the foundation of the several confederacies of Polygars.

The Pollams, or woods, from which is derived the word Polygar, lying in profu-
sion

sion through all the southern parts of Hindostan, the ravages committed in the open countries by these adventurous clans are both frequent and destructive. Cattle and grain are the constant booty of the Polygars. They not unfrequently even despoil travellers of their property, and sometimes murder, if they meet with opposition: yet these very Polygars are the hands into which the aged and infirm, the wives, children, and treasure, of both Hindoos and others are entrusted, when the circumjacent country unfortunately happens to be the seat of war. The protection they afford is paid for; but the price is inconsiderable, when the helpless situation of those who fly to them for shelter is considered, and especially when their own very peculiar character is properly attended to. The native governments of Hindostan are under the necessity of tolerating this honourable banditti. Many of them are so formidable as to be able to
bring

bring fifteen and twenty thousand men into the field.

The Hindoo code of laws, in speaking of robberies, hath this remarkable clause,
 “ The mode of shares amongst robbers
 “ shall be this : — If any thief or thieves,
 “ by the command of the magistrate, and
 “ with his assistance, have committed depredations upon, and brought away any
 “ booty from another province, the magistrate shall receive a share of one sixth
 “ part of the whole. If they received
 “ no command or assistance from the magistrate, they shall give the magistrate
 “ in that case one tenth part for his share,
 “ and of the remainder their chief shall
 “ receive four shares ; and whosoever
 “ among them is perfect master of his occupation, shall receive three shares ;
 “ also, whichever of them is remarkably
 “ strong and stout, shall receive two
 “ shares ; and the rest shall receive each
 “ one

“one share.” Here, then, we see not only a sanction, but even an inducement to fraudulent practices — another singular inconsistency among a people who, in many periods of their history, have been proverbial for innocency of manners, and for uncommon honesty in their conduct towards travellers and strangers.

At the first sight it would appear, that the toleration of the Polygars, owing to their great numbers, and to the security of their fortresses, which are in general impenetrable but to Polygars, that the government licence, in this manner given to them, to live on the spoils of the industrious, might have originally occasioned the formal division, and encouragement to perseverance, which we have just quoted; but the cause I should rather suppose to lie in the nature of certain governments, than to have arisen from any accidental circumstance afterwards; and I am the
more

more inclined to this opinion from the situation of the northern parts of Hindostan, which are, and always have been, uninfested by these freebooters.

The dominion of the East was, in former days, most probably, divided and subdivided into all the various branches of the feudal system. The vestiges of it remain to this hour; Rajahs and Zemindars are nothing more than chieftains of a certain degree of consequence in the empire. If, then, experience has shewn, in other parts of the world, that clans have always been observed to commit the most pernicious acts of depredation and hostility on each other, and that the paramount lord has seldom been able effectually to crush so general and so complicated a scene of mischief, may we not reasonably venture to suppose, that the Hindoo legislature passed this ordinance for the suppression of such provincial warfare, and for the wholesome

purpose of drawing the people, by un-
 alarming degrees, more immediately under
 the control of the one sovereign authority?
 The conclusion, I own, appears to me sa-
 tisfactory. Moreover, Polygars cannot but
 be of modern growth; for the law relative
 to thefts is antecedent to the mention of
 Polygars in history.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT XLIX.

IN the last fragment I observed, that the
Hindoos, in many periods of their history,
have been proverbial for innocency of
manners, and for an uncommon honesty
in their conduct to travellers and stran-
gers. The proof is evident in their laws.
“ Whoever are appointed by the magi-
“ strate for the protection of any city or
“ town, shall be held to protect such city
“ or town : if any thing be stolen in such
“ city or town, and those persons cannot
“ produce the thief, they shall make good
“ the article stolen.”

Most of the first European visitants to
the East dwell with peculiar satisfaction
on the happy consequences resulting from

this regulation. Such is the disposition of the Hindoos, say they, that a man, in the most perfect security, may pass from one extremity of India to the other.

Thefts in general, as we have already said, are punished in Hindostan by pecuniary fines; there are, however, some robberies, which are dreadfully accounted for. For instance — “ If a man steals any
 “ man of a superior cast, the magistrate
 “ shall bind the *grafs beená* (a particular
 “ species of *grafs* so called) round his
 “ body, and burn him with fire: if he
 “ steals a woman of a superior cast, the
 “ magistrate shall cause him to be stretch-
 “ ed out upon a hot plate of iron, and,
 “ having bound the *grafs beená* round
 “ him, shall burn him in the fire*.”

From

* The offence of *kidnapping* (being the forcible abduction or stealing away of a man, woman, or child, from their own country, and sending them into another)

From the severity of this law, one would suppose, the Hindoos had an abhorrence of personal slavery; but the contrary is the case. They admit of personal slavery, and even have an express ordinance on the subject of manumission.—

“ When any person, from a principle of
 “ beneficence, would release his slave,
 “ the mode of it is this :— The afore-
 “ said slave shall fill a pitcher with water,
 “ and put therein berenge-ârook, (rice
 “ that has been cleansed without boiling)
 “ and flowers, and doob, (a kind of small
 “ fallad) and, taking the pitcher upon his
 “ shoulder, shall stand near his master ;
 “ and the master, putting the pitcher
 “ upon the slave’s head, shall there break
 “ the pitcher, so that the water, rice,

ther) was capital by the Jewish law. — “ He that
 “ stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found
 “ in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.” —
 The civil law of Europe likewise punished it with
 death. The common law of England coerce it by fine
 and pillory.

“ flowers, and doob, that were in the
 “ pitcher, may fall upon the slave's body;
 “ after that, the master shall three times
 “ pronounce the words, ‘ I have made
 “ you free.’ Upon this speech, the slave
 “ aforefaid shall take some steps towards
 “ the east; whereupon he shall be free.”

The Hindoos even sell their own children to slavery — seldom, indeed, it must be confessed, but in times of want, and when they are driven to distress. They do, however, sell them, and in an especial manner for the favour of God, to the sanctified priests of the altars of Brahma. I shall hereafter have occasion to treat of religious bondage; for the present, therefore, I shall content myself with thus mentioning it. Every pagoda of celebrity in Hindostan, teems with the most beautiful women of the East, who are devoted to the church. They are interdicted marriage, as were the vestal virgins among
 the

the Romans; but, "like the daughters
 " of Zion, with rings, and nose jewels,
 " and ornaments that tinkle about their
 " feet, and who appear with wanton eyes,
 " walking and mincing as they go" —
 They probably are not the most immaculate.
 Herding with the Brahmins, and
 professionally compelled to solace their
 tedious hours, with the animating aid of
 dancing and of music, the chance is, that
 the holier passions succumb under more
 genial propensities. The priest and the
 priestess are but of common mould. Draw
 the veil, however, around them; the
 sanctuaries of religion are not to be forced
 by the unanointed and the profane.

FRAGMENT L.

WE are now nearly arrived at the end of our Hindoo investigation. A general glance at the character of this people, therefore, before we take our leave, may not be unamusing. The city of Banaris, which is situated upon the Ganges, in a rich and fertile country, has been, from time immemorial, the most celebrated seminary of learning in Hindostan; whither (according to Bernier) the first men of rank and of ability resorted for their studies. Banaris had no public college; the Brahmins took their pupils to their own houses, and there instructed them in the religion, laws, and customs of their country, as well as in the knowledge of the sciences.

In

In medicine, the Hindoos have many books, mostly prescriptive rules, the principle of which, in general, is abstinence. They seldom admit of bleeding, but in cases of great necessity. Their physic is, in general, simples, roots and herbs. They sometimes, indeed, quack; and, for headaches, defluctions in the eyes, and even internal complaints, they will apply caustics to their temples and their foreheads. In anatomy they are ignorant; they never open bodies. The Metempsychosis is a barrier to perfection in that science. In astronomy (at least as far as can at present be discovered, although their year is precisely calculated like the Julian*; and

* The days of the Hindoo week agree precisely, in their astronomical sense, with the days of our week.

Sunnichar, or Zohul, - - - Die Saturni.

Oat-wâr, - - - - - Die Solis.

Soomwâr, or Chunderman, - - Die Lunæ.

Mungulwâr, or Miriech, - - Die Martis.

Budhwâr, or Otario, - - - Die Mercurii.

Beefet-brisputwâr, or Mushterri, Die Jovis.

Sookh-sookurwâr, or Zohrah, - Die Veneris.

although

although the signs of their Zodiac are precisely the same with those of our own system, said to be borrowed from the Egyptians and Babylonians) they are as bad as the Greeks, and they could not be worse; and in geography they are even inferior to the Romans.

Some of the more learned of the Brahmins can calculate an eclipse; but, in general, the Hindoos are as ridiculous as the Thessalians, of whom we read, that
 “ Aganice, daughter of Hegetor, a Thes-
 “ salian, having learnt the cause and the
 “ time of eclipses, whenever any were to
 “ happen, gave out that she was, by her
 “ enchantments, going to draw down the
 “ moon to the earth; directing at the
 “ same time, the Thessalian women to
 “ join with her in making a hideous
 “ noise, to cause her to re-ascend her orb.
 “ Accordingly, whenever they perceived
 “ the beginning of an eclipse, they raised
 “ a clat-

“ a clattering din with kettles and other
 “ instruments, to hinder the yellings and
 “ prayers of the forcerers from being
 “ heard.”

Now the ignorant amongst the Hindoos absolutely do this; but they do nothing more extravagant: they look upon a huge monster as in the act of swallowing the planet, and some of course roar that he may let go his hold. The greater part, however, plunge themselves into water to deprecate his vengeance, or to supplicate him not to devour it.

But instances of a want of scientific knowledge, such as these, should not appear wonderful to us; and the more especially, as we are yet ignorant of the Schanscrit language, in which the knowledge of the ancient Hindoos is said to be contained. Moses himself, we know, is irreverently supposed not to have been an

exact astronomer. The Newtonian system is positively declared not to have been known to the Israelites, otherwise, say our modern luminaries, why retard the sun and moon till four days after the commencement of the creation, when every dabbler in the science must be convinced, that the source of light, which is the sun, must have existed ere day could have manifested itself.

This palpable attack upon the Jewish lawgiver's knowledge of the doctrine of light has indeed met with a modest, but, at the same time, with a most ingenious repulse by Mr. Whitehurst, in his Inquiry into the original State and Formation of the Earth. The world, this author supposes, to have been originally in a state of fluidity; that the component parts of the globe were in a state of separation; that they afterwards united, air with air, water with water, earth with earth, and
with

with their union commenced their specific gravities. As air, however, says he, is eight hundred times lighter than water, so it follows, that air became freed from the general mass, in a like proportion of time, sooner than water, and formed a muddy, impure atmosphere. While the chaos, therefore, revolved round its axis, the separation of the component parts going on all the time, the atmosphere must have progressively been cleared of its grosser matter, (and here the first governing principle of this planetary system begins to shew itself; for the sun he supposes coeval, at least, with the chaos) light and heat must have gradually increased until, in due season, the sun became visible in the firmament; and hence the reason why Moses declares the sun and the moon to have been created on the fourth day. Milton, indeed, conceives matters differently. He calls light the offspring of heaven first born, and, in some respects, vindicates

vindicates the supposed contradiction in the account of the vicissitudes of day and night previous to the creation of the sun.

“ ——— Before the sun,
 “ Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
 “ Of God, as with a mantle didst invest
 “ The rising world of waters, dark and deep,
 “ Won from the void and formless infinite.”

PARAD. LOST.

The geographical knowledge of the Hindoos is still more circumscribed than the astronomical. They have no conception of the oblate spheroidical figure of the globe, nor of its division into zones. The various nations of the earth they suppose thrown into irregular and unconnected parts. Beyond the idea of a plain their reasoning faculties cannot carry them. The ancients, as we style the Greeks and Romans, but the moderns, more properly, when we compare them with the Hindoos, who possessed a most prying, acute, and philosophical genius, were but a little degree

gree superior to the natives of Hindostan, in their deep and learned deductions on this subject. Of all the zones, and they arbitrarily fixed them five, two only, and those situated between the torrid and the frigid zones, they supposed capable of affording residence and nourishment to man. The spaces between the arctic circles they imagined infinitely too cold; and as exquisite an extreme of heat they believed to be the lot of the regions within the tropics. From this ignorance, therefore, of the Greeks and Romans, whom we look upon with awe and admiration, and to whom Christians are infinitely indebted, we should learn to make proper allowance for the want of scientific knowledge in other nations. A Galilæo and a Newton, perhaps, burst into being but once in an eternity!

Poetry seems to be admired, and not to be inconsiderably cultivated in Hindostan;

tan; but Painting and Music, those amusive children of the imagination, and the inseparable companions of each other, have shared a neglected fate among the followers of Brahma. These sister arts, compared with European perfection, are entirely uncultivated, although an express law says, “Among singers, musicians, and others exercising such professions, whoever of them understands the regulation of time, shall receive one share and a half, the others shall receive each one share, and the chief shall receive two shares” of such rewards as are directed to be given to them.

The Hindoo disposition seems to have been invariably bigoted and indolent, prone to useful and to necessary projects, but unattached to innovation, or to the introduction of any of the finer arts. In the manufacture of their muslins, calicoes, silks, shawls, &c. they have manifested a praise-

praise-worthy degree of ingenuity; but agriculture has evidently occupied their chief attention. Rice is their common food. Hence the remains of some prodigious works for the conveyance of water. Egypt herself never exhibited such canals, reservoirs, and other essential works, for the preservation and the distribution of that element. Rice is likewise the article in which the subjects' aid to government is paid. "And Joseph made it a law
 "over the land of Egypt, that Pharaoh
 "should have a fifth part of the grain
 "that was sown, except the land of the
 "priests' only, which became not Pharaoh's." A law, word for word, similar to the Brahmins'. The Hindoos, in short, may be said to have industriously studied agriculture, and to have given their greatest attention to that science.

The vast antiquity of the Hindoo nation, and their uniform character, presents

to us a picture of a venerable, and, in most respects, of a civilised people. In judging of them, therefore, we should gratefully recollect, that the ancients were greatly indebted to the East for their stock of knowledge, most of it, probably, the growth of Hindostan; and that the greatest part of what we know is borrowed from the ancients.

I shall now conclude these inquiries into the laws, manners, customs, and religion of the Hindoos. I have represented them briefly as they have appeared to me. Their records, I will not say, are implicitly to be believed: they bear, however, marks of authenticity and of candour. That fable is the ground-work of Hindoo, as it is of all other chronology, is unquestionable. The immense space which their history includes is sufficient of itself to prove that it is so. But, with Christian charity, let us allow them to continue in the

the conviction of that which appears to them most orthodox. We believe not a miracle of Burmha: they believe not a miracle of Moses. And if we say, the world, agreeably to their computation, is much older than it should be, the retort comes immediately — “ Methufalah was
 “ nine hundred and sixty-nine years of
 “ age;” though your lawgiver says, “ the
 “ days of your years are three score and
 “ ten, and if you attain to four score
 “ years, it is the reason of your strength.”

Verbum sat.

FRAGMENT LI.

THE pure and active element of fire, the emblem of that glorious orb, whose power pervades the innermost recesses of animate and inanimate nature — that element which the holy hands of the followers of Mithras placed in his temples as the symbol of his divinity — that element, and its worshippers, now become the objects of our inquiry. The Parfis, or Gubburs, by both of which names these people are distinguished, though now in great numbers resident in Hindostan, were originally from Iran, or Persia.

About a thousand years before the Christian æra, a priest of that order, it is said, arrived among the Hindoos, and endeavoured

voured to reconcile them to the religion of Mithras. This, however, as it may. We know, for a certainty, the great persecution of these unhappy people took place during the first governments of the disciples of the Koran. Conversion or destruction was the alternative left to them. The consequence was, some repaired to the mosque, whilst others, obstinately tenacious in the belief in which they had been educated, fled from their homes, and, in poverty and distress, sought refuge in the territories of the tolerating Hindoos. The country of Guzurat afforded them the asylum they wanted — there they settled — and there they have continued a harmless, distinct, inoffensive, and industrious people, from the latter end of the eighth century.

The Parsis, though included by Musulmen among the most determined idolaters, are yet far from being deserving of

that appellation. The learned Hyde asserts their belief of the one sole God, the first principle of all beings. To him, he says, they offer up their supplications. The sun, and its emblematical representation, they address but as the purest images of the Creator, and the temple in which he has fixed his throne.

Zoroaster, Zurâ-Thus, or Surrus, about whom so much has been said, and who is imagined to have been the promulgator of the religion of the ancient Persians, is as indistinctly identified as Mango-Cape, or any other such lawgiver of former days. A great deal has been written concerning this founder of the sect of Magi, but all so strangely contradictory, that it would be as possible to ascertain the country and birth place of Homer, as the country and birth place of Zoroaster. It is conjectured, however, he lived about the time when
Darius,

Darius, the son of Hystaspes, filled the throne of Persia.

The religion, or, rather, the mysteries of Mithras, we are told, were exceedingly severe. To be admitted to partake of them, the novice was first under the necessity of undergoing a certain purgation by fire; next, a probation of the incredible number of fifty days fasting was prescribed to him; he afterwards was subjected to an eight and forty hours flagellation; and, as a consistent conclusion to the whole, a twenty-days immersion in snow was to render him pure, and in every respect qualified for an admission to the sacred rites of the gracious and beneficent Mithras.

An account, however, of the religion itself, supposed, indeed, fabulous, is given to this effect: — The father of the prophet of the Parfis, say his biographers,

was by profession a sculptor: the mother was a pattern of conjugal fidelity, and honoured and esteemed as a holy woman. One night, as she lay wrapped in innocent and peaceful slumber, an angel descended from above, and clad her in heavenly apparel. The brightness of her form shone resplendent as the sun — it spread around her — and lo, when she awoke, she found she had conceived a child! — In due season this miraculous interposition of the divine favour declared itself in a lovely boy. Zurâ-Thus, the strength of fire, Ibrahim, or Abraham, it was called; and the wise men denominated it the attracter of hearts, and the governor of men. It laughed when it was born, and cried not like other infants.

A marvellous birth of this nature could not long escape the knowledge of the sovereign of Persia. Apprehension and distrust seized upon his mind when he was told

told it was stiled the governor of men. He trembled for himself and family. A bloody precaution next obtruded itself. He determined to be as secure as possible, and therefore ordered the destruction of all the male children in the land. Heaven, however, guarded its peculiar favourite — his parents concealed him. Hearing of this, the king waxed wrathful: he ordered the child into his presence, and with his own hand attempted to slay him; but his arm withered, and the sword dropped from his hand. He next directed him to be thrown into a fiery furnace; but the fire was unto him as a bed of roses, on which he sweetly reposed. Failing in this, other methods were tried; but all equally ineffectual. The issue of the persecution was a plague of insects that desolated the country, and the death of the king himself in misery and in torment.

The

The successor of the sovereign of Persia, not more righteous than his father, renewed the impotency of attack on the offspring of immortality, and his efforts were consequently in vain. Even when he had loaded this child of heaven with chains, the chains shrunk at the presumption, and his freedom was manifest. Whither, O man! wilt thou turn thyself? — Miracles are not to be withstood. Ibrahim performed many. The fore legs of the king's horse he even restored by prayer, when they had dropped off; and, from that moment, the king and people blessed him. Comment on this, ye learned, for to you I leave it!

St. Austin says, speaking on a pious occasion, “ *Deus loquebatur per suum angelum et virgo per aurem impregnabatur.*” But these ethereal zephyrs, these animating western breezes, have been common in every part of the world. The Apollo

Didymæus of the Greeks, so called from the double gift imparted by him to mankind, the one immediately from his own body, and the other, by reflection, from the moon, was a production of this nature:—His mother being with child, she dreamt the sun entered into her mouth, passed through her body, and thence penetrating into the womb, the little divinity became created.

The Zurâ-Thus of the Persians, however, even after his being acknowledged their lawgiver, continued to manifest his supernatural power by miraculous acts. A river of considerable width they contend to have been passed by him without a boat. They say, he performed other mighty things; and when he was taken up into heaven, that his two sons had the governing of the people entrusted to them; and that one of them made the
sun

sun and moon stand still for a certain number of days.

I will not insist upon this subject any longer. The evident allusion of this last circumstance to Joshua's making the sun and moon stand still, cannot fail to strike you. Indeed the whole of this strange account bears no very distant resemblance to several parts of the Jewish history. The Parfis, I make no doubt, borrowed the ideas from the Hebrew text, though, like the Arabs, (however decisive our professors may be as to the indisputable antiquity of Hebraism) they are unwilling, nay, I believe, positively deny the seniority of the Hebrew language, or of their having had any recourse to it. They claim priority to their own, and to its doctrines, as to that of the earliest people.

About the latter end of the eighth century, as I have already said, the Parfis,

fis, anciently called, from their religion,
 Magi, were driven into the fruitful coun-
 tries of Hindostan; and there they conti-
 nue distinct and inoffensive, marry not,
 nor interfere with other sects. Their lan-
 guage, and the character of it, called Pe-
 helvi, is peculiar to themselves; they still
 preserve their old customs; they worship
 the Almighty in the emblems of fire, air,
 earth, and water — and a sort of fifth ele-
 ment, which they denominate Noor, and
 which may be supposed the phlogiston or
 vivifying principle of nature. They ex-
 pose their dead, as in Persia, on stages,
 within circular inclosures, and there they
 leave them to be defaced by birds of prey.
 If a right eye be picked out by a raven,
 the omen is good; if the left, it is bad,
 and the body is disposed of accordingly.
 I will not detain you any longer. The
 priests of Mithras were anciently called
 Coraces or Ravens, or Hiero-Coraces, or
 Sacred Ravens — that bird being supposed
 consecrated

consecrated to the Sun or Mithras. " And
" the ravens brought him bread and flesh
" in the morning, and bread and flesh in
" the evening, and he drank of the brook.
" And the Lord said, I have commanded
" the ravens to feed thee then." Thus
was Elijah nourished at the streams of
Cherith.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LII.

IN old story we read of Armenia. Some of its children, who are resident in Hindostan, may deem themselves worthy of a page—and they shall have it. The Armenians, who have emigrated from Persia into India, are Christians of the Greek church, not very much enlightened indeed, but, like the Jews of Europe, being money-dealers and usurers, “are, “from the least of them even unto the “greatest, every one given unto covetousness;” and, as a second-dispersed people, are in every corner of the East to be met with.

The Armenians, from their docility, and their very submissive carriage to the rulers

rulers of the land in which they reside, as well as from the appearance of religion which they manifest, (though it is a query if they care more for it than they do for the skull of St. Matthew, the neck and jaw bone of St. John the Baptist, or the hand of St. Gregory, which they boast to have in Persia) have wisely contrived to conciliate the regard of the natives of Hindostan, and to carry on, through the channel of their prejudice, a very extensive and lucrative commerce.

It is a fact, and one perhaps not unworthy of attention, that the nations who have best established themselves in the affections of the Hindoos, are those who have exhibited the greatest attention to the externals of religion. The Armenians, as I have already said, mix with them as with brothers. The Catholics of the Romish church they likewise conceive men of belief, and of the genuine spirit of piety.

piety. Even the followers of Mohammed they look upon as possessing a great degree of religion. Protestants alone are those whom they suppose devoid of faith. This fanciful idea of the Hindoos may be smiled at; but I firmly believe they are riveted in it; and though no evil consequences may be apprehended, it yet is curious, as it shews how far glare and pagantry, even among different people, are capable of affecting the sentiments of the mind. Awe and true devotion never fail to affect the heart of an observer, when the ceremonial of a religion is celebrated with solemnity.

One advantage, indeed, Protestants possess over the others, and that is, the forbearance they shew with respect to miracles. “Fly for relief to the tombs of the martyrs,” says St. Basil; “and whosoever does but touch their reliques,
 VOL. II. M “will

“ will acquire some share of their sanctity.” Now, this is a doctrine that a Hindoo never will be reconciled to. He would just as soon suppose a skeleton capable of tilling the land, as that the bones of eleven thousand virgins should be capable of working eleven thousand cures, when properly applied to; or that the grave of a loathsome carcase should have the miraculous power of conferring sanctity.

The Armenians, to do them justice, offend as little as possible in this article of miraculous interposition. The Hindoos, they perceive, are prone to laugh at such extravagancies; and it is their intent, that their word should not be brought into disbelief: nay, they will heartily join in condemnation of all such pious fables, if they can discover it is in any manner pleasing to those from whom they expect advantage.

advantage. The story once was told to a Hindoo chief, in the presence of an Armenian; of the celebrated picture of St. Dominic of Surriano in Calabrio : that it was brought down from heaven about two centuries and a half ago by the Virgin Mary and St. Catharine : that most miraculous cures had been performed before it : that the blind had been made to see, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, and even the dead, in abundance, to rise up to life : and that even an attested copy of it was miraculously empowered to work the like extraordinary virtues. When the Hindoo heard this, which appeared to him a most palpable imposition, he expressed himself offended. He could tolerate much, he said ; but he did not chuse to put up with an attempt to make him conclude himself a fool. What other people believed, was nothing to him. A tale for a child, was to be told to a child. He and his friend,

Coja, the Armenian, though a Christian, had somewhat a more rational way of thinking, than to give credit to such shameful and impertinent fables. He desired, therefore, as such were his sentiments, that in future he might be excused from listening to what he could consider in no other light than as a studied contempt of the little understanding he was master of. Coja acquiesced heartily in the sentiments of the chief. “ You are right, “ Sir,” says he; “ all such stories are “ abominable, priestly falsehoods: they “ are baits to allure the deluded multitude. How scandalous is it, that such “ reliques of the Shitawn (or devil) “ should remain amongst Christians!” The back of the Hindoo, however, was no sooner turned, than he began in a different tone. “ O! holy church,” said he, “ what a treasure of most hallowed truths “ am I obliged to sacrifice to this wretch, “ this

“ this heathen, this idolater ! But God’s
“ will be done : — No one knows, until
“ he tries, how difficult it is to serve
“ two masters.”

M 3

FRAG.

FRAGMENT LIII.

FROM the aborigines of Hindostan, and from the people to whom they charitably afforded an asylum, we next come to the Mohammedans, under the pressure of whose arms they have fallen. We must here go a little back in our researches, and inquire into the nature and state of those tribes which afterwards adopted the name Mohammedan, and, in particular, of those manners and customs which subsisted among them previous to the appearance of their most extraordinary prophet.

The Arabs, which was the general designation of these people, were a numerous and a hospitable race, who, in a
roving

roving state of society, inhabited some of the most fertile and extensive countries of the southern and western parts of Asia. Somewhat like the Tartars, they delighted to change with the change of seasons—never continuing in a place—roaming from one part to another. — Sometimes dwelling in the vallies — at others on the mountains, and sometimes on the desert plain. Thus fortunately contriving, from the very beginning, and in the most extraordinary manner, to preserve their liberty unsubdued, either by Greeks, Romans, or any other people; Arabia Petræa being the utmost extent of foreign conquest, notwithstanding what Rollin says, that Sesostris of Egypt, in his father's lifetime, invaded and conquered the Arabians.

Among the various classes of the natives of Arabia, we must remember, however insisted upon, that the posterity of Ish-

mael, the son of Abraham and Hagar, are not to be considered as genuine Arabians. Ishmael was an Hebrew; his descendants, therefore, of course, were Hebrews, according to the covenant of circumcision made by God with Abraham. The Arabs, then, are to be looked upon as a people entirely distinct from the children of Israel, and from all other nations. They never were brought under the yoke of subjection; nor did they ever seek acquisitions in distant countries. Freedom and liberty were Arabic objects of ambition. Nothing, says an old writer, of their achievements, can be comparable to a purse and a good sword. These are the preservatives of liberty. Want you the comforts and the conveniences of life, the purse furnishes you with them to the utmost of your wish;—want you protection from the insults and the wantonness of power, what equal to the sword of justice, employed by a man himself, and
in

in the defence of his most invaluable rights?

Unsettled in society, and not confined by the controlling trammels of a regular form of government, the Arabs, in common, followed the pastoral life. Their herds and flocks afforded them the essentials, and even the luxuries of existence. In this primitive state, we cannot expect that their views should have gone very far into the consideration of genuine religion. The belief of a merciful God, they all gave into. They even studied, we are told, the book of Psalms, and other moral productions. But, beyond this, I am of opinion, they had neither materials nor ability to proceed. Instinctive principle occasions a glow of piety in every breast. Human ingenuity follows it in time, and rears a complicated superstructure on the pure foundation of natural theism. If, as it is said, the Arabs attempted

tempted to adduce arguments in support of the unity of the Godhead, their speculations must have been infinitely more amusing than satisfactory. Reason can advance but a certain way: — a step out of the direct road, and all becomes error and illusion.

I will not presume to contradict the assertion of their believing in the unity of the Omnipotent Ruler of the world. It is possible their minds might have been illumined by a spark from the West, where persecution was daily accumulating on the heads of those who insisted upon the position — the primitive followers of Christ. But, possible as it may have been, there is yet every reason to conclude, that not an inconsiderable number of them were positive unbelievers — discrediting every idea of a creation past, of a resurrection to come, and of a future state. To an irreverfible order of

nature they probably attributed the birth and the formation of things, and to a like irreverfible decree they contended that the aged had their diffolution.

Children of ignorance the Arabians certainly muft have been at the period I now am fpeaking of; and whether they had their camels tied at their fepulchres, that thofe animals might be in readinefs for them in another world, it being fcan- dalous to go on foot — whether they be- lieved in the Metempfychofis — or whe- ther they had no belief at all — the truth is, they were in that undetermined ftate of religious fociety when impreffions are eafily made; and what is not lefs cer- tain, when they are indelibly fixed. “ A
“ friend of mine,” fays one of their fa- vourite poets, “ who had been buried
“ fome time, appeared to me a few
“ nights ago, and gave me this balmy
“ confolation: — God fays he is favour-
“ able

“ able to poets. Trembling, and afraid,
 “ I entered into his presence ; but his
 “ smiles of approbation dissipated my
 “ fears. He commanded me to repeat
 “ to him an extempore couplet or two,
 “ as an expiation of my worldly trans-
 “ gressions. I obeyed the High Behest ;
 “ and thus I sang — ‘ Four things I now
 “ present before you, O Alla ! — A man
 “ who was poor, but was content — A
 “ man who had sinned, but was peni-
 “ tent.’ — The thought was received
 “ with benignity : — God issued the de-
 “ cree ; and my crimes were forgiven
 “ me.”

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LIV.

PLUNGED in a labyrinth of uncertainty, though at the same time sufficiently quick and penetrating to know that they were in the ways of error, the Arabians eagerly attended to the first Christians who came among them in the earliest ages of the church. Fond of romance, from their accustomed habit of life, and naturally attached to every thing marvellous and new, the zealous propounders of the doctrine of Moses, and of the subsequent laws of the Saviour of mankind, found it a task neither of difficulty nor danger to bring into the bosom of their community the wild and unsettled inhabitants of the desert. The flame once caught, the rage for Christianity
soon

soon became general. Tribes, whose ideas were dissimilar in other matters, here coalescing in opinion, brother like, and as with one mind, fell prostrate and adored the cross. Christianity at length spread itself almost universally throughout Arabia. Bishops and priests were ordained, and they executed their functions with the hearty approbation and concurrence of their hospitable converts.

In this state was Arabia for some ages before Mohammed. European opinions exercised dominion over them: they still indeed were free, and boasted of the liberty they had received from their fathers: but the train was laid for their subjection — and what neither Alexander, nor Rome in all her glory, was able to accomplish, was now to be brought about by infatuation, and by the most extraordinary imposition that is to be met with in the annals of mankind. Let it not be forgotten,

forgotten, however, that the soil was prepared to Mohammed's hands by Christians, and that he had only to scatter the seeds of his faith, while streams of Israelitish superstition were in readiness to nourish the plant as it should rise.

The nature of the subject on which we are now immediately employed, most unequivocally demands the freedom of inquiry: without it, effects will appear to have arisen from causes inadequate or foreign. The spring of a mighty torrent, to be clearly understood, should be accurately traced to its pristine source. With diffidence, therefore, we will tread, but at the same time with firmness; so that sanctified prejudices may not be treated indecently, nor truth be permitted to escape from a false and an unnecessary forbearance.

Religion,

Religion, in all its forms, and in all its amazing irregularities, is on every account entitled to respect. I mean not the religion of one's own country exclusively — I speak of it at large, and as it is diffused throughout the various nations of the earth. Few of these but, at one time or other, have had faults, at which, in retrospection, they have blushed. Few of these but, at one time or other, have had perfections, in which it has been allowable for them to glory. This is exemplified in the fate of Christianity itself, as much as in the practice and belief of any other religion whatever.

It will be unnecessary for me to recur to the first ages of Christianity, when truth and simplicity were buried under heaps of legendary tales — when morality was thrown aside, and faith was reared paramount to good works. Points
of

of this nature will more properly engage our attention at some future period: it will here be sufficient for us to know, that from the third to the sixth centuries the Christian church exhibited a disgraceful and a most unamiable picture to the rest of mankind. Grace, piety, and good will, driven from the breasts of the followers of a most pure and charitable doctrine, were substituted by intolerance, selfish devotion, and gloomy persecution. Precepts, the most divine, became theses for controversy. Subtle distinctions, abstruse and speculative niceties, seized on men's minds in opposition to clear and unadulterated sense. In short, rancour, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness, stained the character of those days, which, built on the humane and moral principles of the creed established for it, should have been, if possible, to man, immaculate. "He is the good Christian," says Bishop Noyen, even in the seventh cen-

tury, who, by the way, was afterwards
 fainted, “ who comes frequently to
 “ church — who presents the oblation
 “ which is offered to God upon the al-
 “ tar — who doth not taste of his own
 “ industry until he has consecrated a part
 “ of the first fruits of it to God — who
 “ can respect the Creed and the Lord’s
 “ Prayer. Redeem, then, your souls
 “ from destruction, while you have the
 “ means in your power — offer presents
 “ and tythes to churchmen — humbly
 “ implore the patronage of the saints —
 “ for by observing these things, at the
 “ day of judgement thou mayest say,
 “ Give to us, O Lord, for we have
 “ given unto thee.”

While the substance of religion was in
 this manner confined to doctrines the most
 heterodox and depraved — while Chris-
 tianity, from the ambition of priests, and
 the phrenzy of seculars, was daily sink-
 ing

ing deeper and deeper into a gulph more horrible than Paganism — while every species of corruption was allowed, and every falsehood that could be forged was sanctified by assumed apostolic infallibility — whence should it be extraordinary that a new system of belief should be promulgated, or that miserable man should catch at the first beckoning hand which pointed out to him the way of exchanging a state of slavery for one of happiness and content?

FRAGMENT LV.

ALL nations, all societies, ever have had, and ever must continue to have, some mode of worship, some certain prescribed forms of adoration to be paid to that all-powerful Creator, to whom, Nature tells them, they are indebted for their being. Why, therefore, should the leader of any particular sect, whom, in veneration, that sect may stile a prophet, be loaded with opprobrious epithets? Surely the principle of such abuse is mean. Good sense revolts at such illiberality. Darkness, at one time or other, has involved every people. When the light breaks, and to full conviction, it is then, and then only, it can be acknowledged to exist.

The

The Arabs, from whom we have necessarily been obliged to wander, possessed of a belief in the Christian tenets, but for which they had hourly reason to be sorry, and wavering, though tolerably conversant in the history of the books of Moses, and in the testament of Our Saviour, shewed themselves, towards the close of the sixth century, not uninfected by the general dissatisfaction which had gone abroad at clerical usurpations, nor greatly disinclined to a revolt from the bondage in which they found themselves shackled by their ghostly fathers. All they seemed to want was the guidance of some enterprising genius, who had ambition enough to be the founder of a sect, and good sense sufficient to establish the edifice he might rear in their prejudices, and radically in the essence of the new opinions they had imbibed.

In this state were the Arabians, when the indigent son of an indigent chief of the Koreish tribe grew to the great idea of being the ruler and the lawgiver of Arabia. Mohammed, the celebrated personage of whom we are now to treat, entered not into the world with any supernatural indications of his being entrusted with a divine commission. Under an humble roof, and with neither prodigies, nor omens predictive of any future glory, this favourite of fortune, unnoticed and unexpected, was born unto the tribe of Koreish: nay, so very distant was his early situation from that of grandeur, that, on his father's death, the provision left to himself and to his mother was five camels and an Ethiopian female slave.

The youthful days of Mohammed passed in Arabic indolence and ease: he
raced

raced and he hunted with his companions, nor thought of a serious occupation, until his grandfather directed him to apply himself to a trade, which, at best, must have been inconsiderable. In this line Mohammed continued, with industry, until an opportunity presented itself of his being recommended to the patronage of a rich widow, named Khâdijah. To Khâdijah he became factor; — she intrusted him with the management of some extensive concerns; and he, with great fidelity, discharged the trust. Mohammed was a handsome man; his person was elegant, and his aspect commanding: his manners too were happily formed, and his temper and disposition were such as rendered him both respected and beloved. To these advantages were joined a penetrating and sagacious judgement; a quick and thorough knowledge of the characters and dispositions of mankind;

a rather placid, though at the same time a most insinuating carriage; an extraordinary great memory, and a captivating flow of natural elocution. Silent, though not reserved; the friend of cheerfulness and good humour; but, above all, the child of charity and affection. Such was the lawgiver of the Arabs.

With perfections such as these, and with an unblemished character, it is not to be wondered at, that Khâdijah should feel the soft influence of love for Moham-med. She did feel it; and she publicly avowed it by marrying him, and by putting him in possession of all her riches. The marriage was performed at Mecca; and at Mecca they continued to reside. It is not of any material consequence, that the hour, the day, or the minute, should be ascertained, in which the idea of passing for an instrument of heaven first

first entered into Mohammed's imagination. The plan must have been the result of long and serious meditation. Suffice it, that it was fifteen years after his marriage; and that he was then about the age of forty.

Mohammed's first attempt was upon his own family; here he succeeded; but his opposition from without, though his workings were quiet, was strenuous and alarming. The vigour and firmness of his mind, however, urged him to perseverance. Lawgivers and men of supernatural wisdom must always be attended by familiar spirits. Numa had his nymph, Egeria, in a cave; Moses held conferences with the Lord himself, unwitnessed, on the hill of Sinai. Many others have had similar communications: even the priests of Otaheite assert that they have held an immediate correspondence with

with the Divinity from time immemorial.

This common refuge, therefore, of the wisest, as well as of the most ignorant, could not escape the penetrating judgement of Mohammed. He saw that men were to be entrapped through the medium of imposition; and he saw that he must plead either an intimate intercourse with a messenger from God, or a direct and a heavenly inspiration. The former promised best: it afforded him time for planning and for reflection; and, moreover, it placed him at a more positive distance from detection. To a cave on Mount Hara, then, Mohammed solemnly and regularly repaired. He there prayed, fasted, and communed with the minister of Alla.

It is astonishing that the very rational creatures of this world, who pride themselves

selves so much on their understanding, should, in the course of five or six thousand years, have admitted of prophets, (unless poets and psalmodists, who sung verses extempore, and oracular priests, come under that denomination) to the amount of nearly two hundred and thirty thousand. The enumeration, indeed, is incredible; but the catalogue is so precisely given, that it would be uncivil to disbelieve it. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed, each, it is alledged, came with a special commission. This we will allow, (Christianly speaking, the last excepted); the other, indeed, had no such plenipotentary authority: but still they were sent into the world to reclaim mankind, and to exhort men to virtue and to repentance. “ For it was so, when Jezebel cut off
 “ the prophets of the Lord, that Obadiah took an hundred of them, and
 “ hid

“ hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed
 “ them with bread and water.” Now,
 whether these, or such as these, are in-
 cluded in the above list, given to us by
 the disciples of the Koran, I know not:
 I should suppose they must; for how are
 they otherwise to make out their num-
 bers?

The hardness and the presumption of
 Mohammed's pretensions, (the last, though
 not the least, of holy cheats) staggered
 the more sensible part of the Arabs. They
 wondered at his rashness, and, more par-
 ticularly, at his daring to propound a
 doctrine, when it was universally well
 known he was utterly ignorant of letters.
 Day after day, however, the lawgiver of
 Mount Hara continued to broach the prin-
 ciples of his new-fangled worship. He
 treated with indifference the scoffs and
 the mockeries of his enemies. The laws
 of

of Moses, and the precepts of our Saviour, served him as the basis of his religion; and on these he was certain to erect a respectable and a permanent structure.

That Mohammed was master of no acquired learning is most certain: he could neither read nor write: he expressly mentions it himself, and gives it as a most convincing proof of his revelations having proceeded immediately from God. —

“ This Koran,” says he, “ could not
 “ be composed by any except God; but
 “ it is a confirmation of that which was
 “ revealed before it, and an explanation
 “ of the scripture. Will they say Mo-
 “ hammed hath forged it? Answer; —
 “ Bring a chapter like unto it, and call
 “ whom you may to your assistance, be-
 “ sides God, if you speak the truth.”

The challenge was absolutely given; and
 a select

a select passage from the Koran was written in letters of gold, and hung up for the literati of Arabia to surpass it if they could. They could not, at least so Arabic historians record, and Mohammed consequently came off victorious.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LVI.

THIS want of erudition in Mohammed must, in some respects, have been disadvantageous to him, while, in others, it manifestly must have tended to the forwarding his views. Disqualified himself from pursuing those researches into sacred writ, which it was essential for him to understand, his reliance, in consequence, must have been placed on the abilities and perspicacity of coadjutors; whereas, on the other hand, the not being able to read, or to express himself in writing, made whatever he promulgated, and which carried complicated allusions to the Hebrew text, appear in so extraordinary a light to the multitude, that nothing but a divine interposition could account for it.

Many

Many years elapsed in invincible patience on the part of Mohammed. The whole time exhibited a series of attack and defence. Abounding in the mysterious language of inspiration, and wound up now and then to the extravagance of enthusiasm, the doctrines of the Koran slowly crept into the minds of the few, who, on every sacred occasion, have been found to mistake the ravings, and the distortions of the imagination, for the secret operations of the Divinity. But the majority of the Arabians remained still unconverted. Could he have exhibited a miracle, their obstinacy would not have been of continuance. But he disclaimed against miracles: he avowed himself not empowered by Alla to accomplish them.

Ten years had been spent in this contest, when Mohammed found himself compelled to fly from the city of Mecca

to

to Medina: the æra, by the way, at which the Higeira commences — The six hundred and twenty-second year of Christ. At Medina he continued for some time, and then again returned to Mecca, where he remained till the twelfth year of his mission, still unweariedly working at his holy calling: he then took his journey to Jerusalem; and thence his flight to heaven. It was now that Mohammed began to feel his consequence. Until this period he had been comparatively passive, owing, as it is supposed, to his want of power. His strength being increased, and his friends openly and declaredly ranked under the standard of their prophet, terms were no longer necessary to be held with his enemies and persecutors; and he avowed himself, at once, the heaven-appointed lawgiver of Arabia. The high decree had been issued to him to punish the obstinate and profane, and effectually to extirpate every remnant of

idolatry; and, that acts should enforce as well as words, he rigorously begun, as other prophets had done before him, to compel into a belief those who would not be convinced by the soundness of his doctrine.

Mohammedan writers are not agreed upon the precise time that Mohammed exercised his apostolic function. Some historians alledge, that he lived until the tenth, and others until the eleventh, year of the Higeira. However this may be, his zeal, and probably his cruelty, increased with the extension of his authority. Time seemed to give strength to his determination, and to increase his unbounded desires for universal conversion. In this disposition of mind, and in the height of his career, an unexpected blow prevented the accomplishment of his mighty ambition. He was poisoned at Medina by a woman, and expired there in the
 sixty-

sixty-third or the sixty-fifth year of his age.

To venture an opinion on the conduct of Mohammed, after all that has been written on the subject, may probably be hazarding too much. But, it matters not, we have him at present before us, and he shall not be dismissed without that attention to which, from his extraordinary character, he is justly entitled. Mohammed, by imposing himself upon mankind, as the select and the anointed of heaven, may doubtless be blamed, and be considered as unpardonably culpable. He may likewise be condemned for his sanguinary, and, in many instances, his cruel decrees: but, on the other hand, look into the Koran; see what strains of morality are contained in it, a few passages excepted. Observe how he positively enjoins kindness, benevolence, and all earthly charity. These are surely indications of not

a diabolical nature. That bloodshed and destruction were the consequences of many of his acts, it would be folly to deny; but had he not bitter and implacable enemies? Was he not threatened, and persecuted with unremitted vengeance? These are forcible rousers of the rage of man. In short, and I hope I am unprejudiced in the conclusion, Mohammed, in my apprehension, was a great, a resolute, and an ambitious man. He aimed at the sovereignty of the world; and whether his views were to be accomplished by arms, or by faith, the alternative was immaterial. Supreme rule was his object: he fought it, and he acquired it. Others have done the same, and they are renowned and celebrated by moralists and historians.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LVII.

MOHAMMED's religion abounds in precepts of moral practice, as well as in those of faith. He gives most praiseworthy directions for the conduct of the affairs of this life. Relative to those of the world to come, he speaks most intelligibly, and, to Mussulman minds, most divinely. It is a most fantastic and senseless way to argue, that misery is inevitable — that evil is fatally necessary — and that both one and the other are the consequences of existence. Better to speak comfort to the heart of man. Why plunge the mind in sorrow, when it is possible to give it comfort by pleasurable sensations? Mohammed says, be as I have commanded you, and your rewards shall surpass even

your imagination. What some of these rewards are, he particularly enumerates in a separate section of his Koran.

It has already occurred to us, that a principal part of the edifice of the Mohammedan religion must have been gleaned from the Israelitish text, and the subsequent testament of our Saviour. Six centuries had elapsed between the crucifixion of the son of God, and the appearance of Mohammed; and during that time, as we have already noticed, the most absurd and incoherent doctrines were broached by the fathers of the church. I mention it again, but, I would wish it to be understood, with no other intent than merely as an introduction to a conjecture, that the prophet of the Arabians was probably indebted to Justin Martyr, (or some such Christian) who flourished about fifty years after the apostles, for the idea of heavenly gratifications, which he, in so lavish a manner,

ner, has promised to the faithful of his followers. Justin, in speaking of the Millennium, in which he professes himself to have belief, has these extraordinary words — “The saints,” says he, “shall
 “ be raised in the flesh, and reign with
 “ Christ in Jerusalem, enlarged and beau-
 “ tified in a wonderful manner for their
 “ reception, in the enjoyment of *all sen-
 “ sual pleasures*, for a thousand years be-
 “ fore the general resurrection.”

Intelligible as Mohammed has made his paradisaical rewards, his punishments denounced against the wicked are not in any manner more difficult of comprehension. No sooner is a corpse laid in the grave, say the Mohammedan doctrines, than it is received by an angel, who gives it notice of the coming of the two examiners — Creatures of the most black, livid, and terrible appearance. These, seated in horrible ar-

ray, order the dead person to sit upright, and then examine him concerning his faith as to the unity of God, and the mission of Mohammed. If, happily for himself, his answer be right, his body is suffered to rest in peace, and it is refreshed by the air of paradise; but if otherwise, they beat him on the temples with iron maces till, in anguish, he roars so loud, that he is heard by all from east to west, except by men and genii. They then press the earth on the corps, where it is left to be gnawed and stung, until the resurrection, by ninety-nine dragons with seven heads each.

The orthodox believers of the Koran, thoroughly convinced that an examination is to take place on their demise, are careful, as the Jews were of old, that their grave shall be capacious enough to admit of their sitting up with ease. And as the Roman Catholics, whom they likewise follow, have

have prayers performed for their souls after their decease, so have the Mohammedans; and they leave funds for this purpose for the maintenance of dervishes and fakeers, who, residing at or near their tombs, are constantly at prayer, and are nightly careful that a lamp is kept burning at the head of their graves. How long the foregoing state of purgatory, for purgatory it certainly is, is to last, the most profound of the Mohammedans are at a loss to know. They are of opinion, however, that whenever the day of resurrection does arrive, it is to continue for several thousand years, during all which time the skulls of the wicked shall boil like a pot.

Perfect in all their parts and members, mankind are to appear before the judgment seat of God, as they originally sprang from their mothers' wombs, barefooted, naked, and uncircumcised. A
doctrine

doctrine this also, borrowed from the primitive fathers; but the indelicacy of it has caused a variety of opinions among the pious resorters to the mosque. Even one of Mohammed's own wives, Ayesha, objected to it, apprehensive lest modesty might be offended by so shocking a deviation from decorum. The prophet, however, quieted her fears, by assuring her, the business of the day would be too weighty and serious to allow of men and women's looking upon each other with other eyes than those of pity and compassion.

The day of the resurrection is to be an awful day, according to Mohammed. The death-piercing trumpet sounded, the sepulchres all rent, and the graves casting forth their dead, mankind shall then repair to the dread tribunal. Here the trial of earthly actions is to commence. The soul
shall

shall say, "O Lord, my body I received
 " from thee ; for thou createdst me with-
 " out a hand to lay hold with, a foot to
 " walk with, an eye to see with, or an
 " understanding to apprehend with, till
 " I came and entered into this body ; there-
 " fore punish it eternally, but deliver me."

On the other hand, shall the body urge,
 " O Lord, me thou didst create like a stock
 " of wood, having neither hand that I
 " could lay hold with, nor foot that I
 " could walk with, till this soul, like a
 " ray of light, entered into me, and my
 " tongue began to speak, my eyes to see,
 " and my feet to walk ; therefore punish
 " the soul, but deliver me." This knot-
 ty dispute between the body and the soul
 (and more despicable extravagancies, by
 the way, will be found amongst other
 sects, before we come to a conclusion)
 shall avail, unhappily, but little in the
 issue. The Almighty decree shall pass
 with

with unerring justice. Woe to the finner, therefore, for in both soul and body shall he experience the torments due to his transgression.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LVIII.

WHEN Mohammed had determined on the system of belief, which he was desirous to promulgate, he wisely adopted many of the received and the sanctified opinions of those whom he had reason to suppose he should convert. Hence the sources of the greatest part of his doctrines might readily be traced. An instance now before us is in the celebrated bridge, Sirât, borrowed from the Magi. This bridge, and nothing can be more frightful, is represented as thrown immediately across the tremendous abyss of hell. Over this, and it is described no thicker than a hair, and sharper than a sword, all miserable mortals are to endeavour to clamber subsequent

quent to their trial. If loaded with guilt, alas, what is to save them! Down they plunge into the flames of perdition, shod with shoes of fire; the fervour of which shall cause their skulls to boil like cauldrons.

“ ——— Where nature breeds

“ Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,

“ Abominable, inutterable, and worse

“ Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,

“ Gorgons and hydras, and chimeras dire.”

MILTON.

In a contrary direction, if crowned with virtue, swift to the regions of heaven they shall fly, where they shall partake of the blessings of Tûba, or the tree of happiness, which shall spontaneously supply them with food, raiment, and richly-caparisoned horses to ride upon — where rivers and fountains shall refreshingly flow with milk, with honey, with water, and with wine — where the commonest pebbles shall be diamonds, rubies,

and

and emeralds, of the purest water — but,
above all, where the “resplendent and
“ravishingly black-eyed girls of para-
“dise,

“Love-tinctur’d cheeks, whence roses seek their bloom,
“And lips from whence the zephyrs steal perfume.”

JONES.

shall be with open arms in readiness to
receive them — where even the meanest
of the faithful shall have, exclusive of his
earthly wives, which he shall also have,
seventy and two of their most exquisite
Hoorāuns, for the completion of his feli-
city. “All sensual pleasures are to be
“enjoyed,” say the Christian supporters
of the fabric of Millennium: nor did
the sublime author of Paradise Lost deem
it inconsistent to put into the mouth of
Raphael, words importing similar gratifi-
cations —

* — Though

" ——— Though in heav'n the trees
 " Of life, ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
 " Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn
 " We brush mellifluous dew, and find the ground
 " Cover'd with pearly grain: yet God hath here
 " Varied his bounty so with new delights,
 " As may compare with heaven."

And again, in reply to Adam —

" ——— With a smile that glow'd
 " Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue.
 " ——— Suffice thee that thou know'st
 " Us happy; and without love, no happiness.
 " Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st,
 " (And pure thou wert created) we enjoy
 " In eminence."

B. v. and viii.

And here I think it would be injustice
 to the gallantry of Mohammed, were we
 to pass over in silence the unjust accusation
 his doctrine labours under, viz. That wo-
 men are excluded paradise. They are not
 excluded paradise: on the contrary, their
 entrance is not only permitted, but soli-
 cited. Maidens, even, though less cour-
 teous people have denominated them ape-
 leaders in another place, are invited to the
 heavenly mansions, where lovers are pro-
 vided

vided for them, and where “ they are
 “ also to partake of every species of de-
 “ light.” Why the Mussulman prophet
 should have had the slur thrown upon his
 character, of his being an interdicter of
 female happiness, I know not; unless it
 took its rise from the incautious declara-
 tion, that, in viewing paradise, he per-
 ceived the majority to be the indigent;
 but, in prying into hell, he found the
 greatest part of its inhabitants to be wo-
 men.

The Cabbalists, from whom Mohammed
 unquestionably borrowed, supposed the
 existence of four heavens, where the souls
 of innumerable holy women were married
 to the souls of holy men; where, “ as in
 “ marriages on earth, bodies cohabited
 “ with bodies — so souls, in marriages
 “ in heaven, cohabited with souls.”

Refined as these ideas of Mohammed must certainly be deemed, when drawn into comparison with what such a writer as the Jew, Eliezer Pike, advanced — “That God, in the beginning of the world, created, on the fifth day, two great whales, one of which he keeps alive to this day, to sport and play with; and the other he preserves from corruption in salt water, to serve as a dish at the banquet with which he is to regale the righteous at the last day” — They still are capable of deriving a greater and a more merited degree of approbation from us, when we even place them in contrast immediately with what many of the forefathers of Europe used zealously to glory in. “What strange new joys rise upon me! I am dying — I hear Odin’s voice — The gates of his blissful palace open to me — The half-naked maidens meet me with a smile — lovely
 “ crea-

“ creatures ! — A sky-blue scarf heightens
 “ the enchanting whiteness of their com-
 “ plexions ! — Behold, they welcome me
 “ with the skulls of my slain enemies
 “ filled with elevating beer — I come !
 “ I come ! ”

P 2

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FRAGMENT LIX.

THE Israelites made pilgrimages; the Christians made pilgrimages; Mohammed would have pilgrimages also. He pitched upon the temple of Mecca, a most noted place of worship, and one held in such extraordinary veneration for many centuries previous to his mission, that the Arabs considered it as co-eval with the world. Mecca is situated about three days journey from the shores of the Red Sea: it is surrounded by a rocky, sandy country, intensely hot—a soil barren, and a climate not very favourable: but, notwithstanding these disadvantages, Mohammed ordained that it should be the holy of holies. It was the spot which had given him birth; and it held the
Cabâh,

Cabâh, or sacred temple, of his countrymen.

Religious penances have been of universal growth ; they were formerly to be met with every where ; they are now rarely to be seen but among Hindoos, Mohammedans, and Catholics of the church of Rome. The Mohammedans, impressed with the idea of the great efficacy of pilgrimage, " he who dying without it," according to tradition of their prophet, and indeed according to the Koran, " being no better than a Jew or a Christian," have, from their first conversion, been uniformly, though not madly, desirous of performing this essential and necessary point of their duty. On this account, infinite difficulties have been, and still are, daily surmounted ; and riches in abundance continue to be the pious rewards of the consecrated guardians of the Cabâh.

I at no time mean to sneer, when the inoffensive customs of any people are under investigation. I would gladly pass over absurdities, and inquire into nothing but what was praise-worthy and consistent—but this is denied me. Folly cannot always be escaped—we must encounter it sometimes; and when we do, charity, I think, requires no farther, than that we should treat it with tenderness and civility.

The pilgrimages to Mecca are attended with many curious circumstances. Three days are allotted to fasting and prayer at Mecca. On the fourth, a short progress is made into the desert; and there a sacrifice is performed. After this, the pilgrims proceed to Mount Arafat, which is not at any considerable distance, laden with two and forty pebbles, no stones being to be had on the desert. Here they continue three days longer:—on the first morning,
after

after devout prayers at the foot of the mountain, throwing seven stones at it — on the second, fourteen — and on the third, twenty - one. This stoning the mountain they call pelting the head of the devil, for tempting Abraham to offer up Ishmael (for they will not allow it was Isaac) as a sacrifice to the Lord.

But in the same breath that they tell you this, they will likewise inform you, it was on this mountain that Adam and Eve had their first meeting, after two hundred and twenty years separation, and that too by accident, each being ignorant of the other's fate, after their expulsion from paradise. Now, if we were to reason upon the principles of common understanding, one should naturally be led to think, that if the devil merited pelting on the one account, he was entitled to some sort of thanks, at least, for the other, in permitting this meeting of our first pa-

rents, after he had seduced them from their primæval innocence, and after he had allowed them to wander so many years in fruitless inquiry after each other. There is certainly a degree of inconsistency in these matters. However, the ceremony of stoning is gravely to be gone through; and the pilgrims return to their devotions at the temple.

It has already been remarked, that the temple of Mecca was a place of holy estimation previous to the mission of Mohammed. Many of the most orthodox of the Mussulman doctors insist on Adam's being the original founder of it: that he erected the first building; but, on its being destroyed at the deluge, that it was re-erected by Abraham and his first born, Ishmael. They even advance it as a fact, (in opposition to the Hindoos, the only people indeed who dispute the point) that the burying-place of Adam is on a mountain

mountain within about three miles of Mecca, called Abou-Cais.

These pretensions of the Arabians are grounded on the disbelief of a terrestrial paradise. They admit not of the island of Serendib, or Ceylon's, being the garden of Eden.

“ ——— Where gentle gales,
“ Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
“ Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
“ Those balmy spoils.”

PARAD. LOST, b. iv. v. 156.

From the seventh heaven, say they, Adam was driven. He then, according to their tradition, made a journey into Arabia; built, or, at least, visited the spot where the Cabâh has been since erected; and, dying in the neighbourhood of Mecca, he was interred on Abou-Cais. And here, in the spirit of candour, we must allow the Arabians to be not greatly beyond our own scriptural commentators, who,

who, in the primitive ages of the church, maintained, that paradise was the place into which Enoch and Elias were translated, and into which St. Paul himself was admitted. Whether the Mohammedans are right, or whether these Christians were right, I know not. It is sufficient for us that they each establish the premises, and support them as premises generally are supported in this world, by bold and unblushing assertions.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LX.

CAN the imposition of the most sacred moral duties be still branded with uncharitable aspersions by liberal-minded Christians? or can the introduction of civilization among a wild and an unsettled people be still condemned and reprobated in the conduct of the prophet of Arabia? I trust not. The eyes of mankind are at length happily opened to truth, and to the real perception of things. Mohammed had much to do. One instance, out of a great many detestable practices which he had to conquer, was, the burying daughters alive, lest they should be burdensome or disgraceful to their families. If a girl arrived at the age of six years, the father said to the mother, "Prepare her, and adorn her,
" that

“ that I may carry her to her mothers.” He then led her to a pit, dug on purpose, and buried her alive ; or, as was the custom with others, the mother was delivered on the brink of a well — if it was a son she brought into the world, the son was preserved — if a daughter, the daughter was instantly destroyed. Mohammed, and to his honour be it spoken, abolished this inhuman practice.

The complection of our prophet, if fame speaks true, was amorous : he loved the fair sex. “ It is the will of God,” said he, “ that I, like all other prophets, “ should have as many wives and concubines as I please.” Hence his claim to gratification was unlimited ; — he very guardedly forbore confining himself to any certain number, though, as relative to wives, he limited each of his followers to four. “ Now King Solomon loved many “ strange women, together with the “ daughter

“ daughter of Pharaoh, women of the
 “ Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zi-
 “ donians, and Hittites.”

A principal reason with Mohammed, perhaps, independent of this, his own disposition, in allowing an unrestrained concubinage, was, the fate of the infant females, whose lives he was determined no longer should be sacrificed. Polygamy, as among all other eastern people, was tolerated in Arabia. The illicit commerce of the sexes was, however, held in disrepute. It was left to Mohammed to give female transgressors a respectable situation in life, and to render efficient that principle of Moses which says, “ When a man
 “ lays with a woman, she shall be his
 “ wife, because he hath humbled her —
 “ he may not put her away all his days.” The children of concubines, among Mohammedans, from their prophet’s fiat, became

became in estimation equally legitimate, though not altogether so respectable, with those born of their wives; illegitimacy being pronounced only with respect to the offspring of prostitutes, whose fathers were unknown. But lest this should not be enough, Mohammed ordained that temporary marriages (like the left-handed marriages of Christians in Germany) should also be held legal.

According to historians, jealousy was a prevailing passion of the Arabians before the days of Mohammed. They give them even the wretched credit of being the inventors of those despicable precautions which degraded the female part of their society to be the slaves, not the partakers, of the joys of love. We have already had occasion to speak at full length of the hurtful consequences of polygamy, in a general point of view. We shall
here

here consider it as a particular grievance, the most intolerable and oppressive — the cause of perpetual disagreement, of endless animosity, quarrel, and intrigue — the spur of those natural, though not very amiable, propensities in man — pride, tyranny, and selfishness; of mortification and despondency in woman; and, worst of all, of plot and assassination in the offspring of so inequitable a connection. Jealousy, with its train of precautions, should also be brought into the scale; for jealousy is the attendant of conscious inability, of unnatural subjection, and of the want of confidence in domestic engagements.

Arabia Petræa afforded the most plentiful crop of the green-eyed generation. The other parts of Arabistan were infected in various degrees. Few places, however, could be found where women enjoyed

joyed any extraordinary immunities, although it is strongly alledged, that females, among certain tribes, had a very active concern in all civil and military transactions. What the learned Mr. Richardson advances in his dissertation, may be quoted in proof of this assertion, and I therefore give it, though it may be supposed to speak against my own conclusions.

“ In the famous battle of Yermock, fought
 “ in the year of Christ 636, between
 “ the Arabs and the Greeks, and which
 “ decided the fate of Syria, and of the
 “ Greek empire in the East, the fortune
 “ of the day was restored by the women.
 “ The Grecians greatly outnumbered the
 “ Arabians; and their onset was so impetuous,
 “ that they drove them to their
 “ tents. There the fugitives, stopped by
 “ the women, were alternately reproached
 “ and encouraged. They threatened even
 “ to join the Greeks; and one of their
 “ bravest

“ bravest officers appearing disposed for
 “ flight, a lady knocked him down with
 “ a tent-pole, saying, ‘ Advance ! para-
 “ dise is before your face ! — fly, — and the
 “ fire of hell is at your back !”

“ In all the beauteous glow of blooming years,
 “ Beside each chief a warrior nymph appears ;
 “ Each with her sword, her valiant lover guards,
 “ With smiles inspires him, and with smiles rewards.”

LUSIAD.

VOL. II.

Q

FRAG-

FRAGMENT LXI.

“ ——— with voice

- “ Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
 “ Her hand soft touching, whisper’d thus : Awake,
 “ My fairest, my espous’d, my latest found,
 “ Heaven’s last best gift, my ever-new delight !
 “ Awake : the morning shines, and the fresh field
 “ Calls us ; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
 “ Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,
 “ What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
 “ How nature paints her colours, how the bee
 “ Sits on the bloom, extracting liquid sweet.”

MILTON.

HOW unhappy for you, O females of Arabia ! that Milton was not of the Mohammedan belief ! Had he but sung to you, as he has so sweetly sung to Christians, bars and bolts had been of no avail. You would have known the liberty that heaven had ordained you ; and so knowing, all chearfully would have enjoyed it. Alas ! how different your state.

Voyage

“ Voyage - writers,” (says, we will hope, the now-resplendent and ravishing inhabitant of paradise, Lady Wortley Montague) — “ voyage-Writers,” says she, “ are apt to condole on the miserable “ confinement of Mohammedan ladies, “ though they are, perhaps, more free “ than any ladies in the universe, leading “ a life of uninterrupted pleasure, free “ from the cares of life, and thinking of “ nothing but the agreeable amusement of “ spending money, and inventing new fashions. A husband would be thought “ mad that exacted any degree of economy from his wife. It is his business “ to get money, and her’s to spend it.”

But here I am afraid the lively and animated describer of the manners and customs of the Turks permitted a warm imagination to run counter to what must have been her more temperate judgement. The concealment of women is sacred among

Mohammedans. Brothers are scarcely admitted to visit sisters in private. Would Lady Montague have applauded this, had she been personally concerned? Uncurbed, unrestrained in her own pursuits, it was easy for her to pronounce seclusion to be happiness. But a nature so prone to tenderness, and a fancy so exquisite and prying, could never, surely, have endured the dismal solitude of a cell! Pampered and fed, could she have submitted to the unimpassioned embraces of a proud, satiated wretch, the common property of hundreds? Truly, my good Lady, and I speak it with veneration to your memory, the confinement of Mohammedan ladies, even of your Fatima, never could have been the source of pleasure and content. The walls of a prison have never afforded satisfaction yet; nor hath the sacrifice of love, with all the endearments of reciprocal affection, ever been the means of conferring

ferring, on the victims, a constancy of delight.

Disappointed as Mohammedans must be in even *sensual* gratifications, they are still farther from the certainty of fidelity in their females than other more liberal nations are, who glory in the confidence they can place in the partners of their bosoms. No repositories of love ever afforded more genuine intrigue than harems or seraglios: they are the constant theatres of human frailty. Similar distress creates similar commiseration. The devoted fair ones feel for each other: they plan in concert; and, when least suspected, licentiously indulge themselves under the cloak, and through the connivance of their own, or of a confederate community.

The haram, in all Mussulman countries, is, it must be confessed, unbounded in its influence. It is the feat of politics, the

stage of negociation; and were it to be inquired where female interest was probably most prevalent, it safely might be answered, — in the seraglio of a Mohammedan; and the reason is evident. Men, it is true, are debarred, but women are not prevented visiting each other. Under the privilege which is thus allowed them, they freely communicate and open their hearts to each other; moments of dalliance, afterwards, furnish them with the ready means of acquiring information from their respective lords. Thus informed, they resolve upon the weightiest measures of the State; and, like a synod of divinities, control those very men, who, in pride of soul, conceive themselves their rulers. Viziers, ministers, generals, admirals, all have their several cabals and parties within the sacred confines of the haram.

The seraglio is moreover the place in which a voluptuous Mohammedan passes
the

the greatest part of his time : it is the place in which he has imbibed the earliest rudiments of his education. This mode of instructing youth must undoubtedly be considered as one very principal cause of the great influence of the haram, which we have represented as irresistible. Men brought up under the eye and under the discipline of women, and impressed by them with soft and indolent ideas, readily acquiesce in surrendering to their gentle chains. The child of effeminacy, how can the riper age of man be otherwise than emasculate ? All of us are but the creatures of one kind of fashioning or another : taught to speak — we are likewise taught to think. Scarce any man acts from his own ideas. Of that which is sown, that do we reap.

FRAGMENT LXII.

AS the haram, or Zunnana, is the place in which an elegant and voluptuous Mohammedan passes his most happy hours, we will suppose that taste and magnificence are sometimes (for I can witness they are not always) displayed in their internal decoration. We are told, indeed, of most sumptuous apartments; of tapestry, brocades, and costly furniture; of baths and grottos; gold-bespangled floors; and perfumes that out-vie the sweet fragrance of the groves. But, in all my journeying, and in all my inquiries, my evil genius hath fated me to observe a very different complection in the dwellings destined for the ladies. So far from being commodious, their rooms are invariably small and gloomy;

gloomy; and, for one that I have seen or heard of, tolerably convenient — I have counted fifty, at a moderate computation, scarcely adequate to the hovelling of any being of the human species.

The whole of the seraglio pile, indeed, is dismal. Dead walls and iron bars, are the securities against outward intruders. Sooty and deformed monsters, on the inside, are the guardians of the chastity of the wretched inmates. Whence, then, can we suppose the society of the haram to be lively, happy, and entertaining? Let the female, in an equal degree with the male sex, be acknowledged adepts in the beautiful writings of Persia and of Arabia; let their imaginations be full of fire — their talents brilliant — In short, let them be possessed of every natural and acquired improvement; yet where is that liberty that gives the zest to all? O freedom,

dom, how dearly must thou be regretted! Sweetly ye may sing, ye heart-bleeding captives of oppression; but liberty debarred must be the long-echoing close to every strain that you can warble. God help you!

But is it the unjust immuring of the female sex alone which renders the plurality of wives and concubines detestable? No. — A still more horrid and outrageous spectacle presents itself: a spectacle which cries out shame on the depravity of the world; for what more atrocious than that man shall not possess even a property in his sex! I need not here tell you, I allude to eunuchs, the mutilated slaves and protectors of seraglios. The prevalency of this shameful custom has been of very old date. We read of it in the scriptures of the Jews. The Romans had it; the priests of Cybele were all eunuchs.

“ And

" And Cybele's priests, an eunuch at their head,

" About the streets a mad procession lead;

" The venerable gelding, large and high,

" O'erlooks the head of his inferior fry:

" His awkward clergymen about him prance,

" And beat their timbrels to their mimic dance,"

DRYDEN'S Juvenal, 6th satire.

We find it even among Christians: but
 Mussulmen have carried it to the most
 dreadful length. Tavernier says, in the
 year 1659, he calculated two and twenty
 thousand who were sold in one province.
 Is this to be believed? What a murderous
 cheat on the intentions of nature! No
 wonder the world should decrease in inha-
 bitants, while the creature of a day is
 privileged to appropriate an unlimited
 number of females to his own feeble pur-
 pose, and a number almost as great of
 non-entities, to watch over and protect
 them.

But I will forbear dwelling upon a sub-
 ject so disgraceful — I will merely remark
 to you, as some sort of consolation, that
 the

the uglier the eunuchs are, the better and the more valuable they are considered. Extreme ugliness is the summit of perfection in these beings. To have a flat nose, a distorted turn of the eye, and great mouth, thick lips, a set of teeth scattered and black, are the essentials which render an eunuch infinitely more estimable than all the symmetry and masculine beauties of even an Apollo of Belvidere.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXIII.

MOHAMMED, although a considerable number of years had elapsed between his assumption of missionary authority and his death, was never enabled to carry the conversion of unbelievers farther than the confines of his own Arabia. It was the successors of Mohammed, under the venerable title of Khalifs, or vicars of God*, who first began to make impression on the neighbouring States. Abubeker was the leader of the way to foreign conquest. Abubeker was followed by Omar, who, in less than four years, extended the dominion of the Khalifat from Egypt to the frontiers of Persia.

* Khalif, indeed, signifies, literally, "a successor."

His

His reign commenced in the thirteenth year of the Higeira; and, in little more than half a century from that period, the followers of Mohammed, or Saracens, as they were then called, made themselves masters not only of Spain, but of various other countries in Europe, Africa, and Asia.

The principal function of the Khalif, in quality of Imam and chief sovereign, or head of the Mussulman belief, was to read prayers, and pronounce the Khothbah, or sermon, once a week, in the principal mosque in Mecca. Besides which, while Mecca continued the residence of the Khalif, it was his duty to attend the pilgrims to the holy temple: but when the seat of government was transferred to Bagdat, that ceremony became the business of a legate. The Khalif was likewise, from his office, to head the armies of the faithful; not in quality of persecutor or destroyer,

destroyer, but as the leader of a great and a victorious people, who, while they took arms to propagate their belief, were yet so liberal as to permit those who would not embrace it, to adhere to their own tenets, and to practise their own rites. Hindostan exhibited proofs of this liberality. Spain was even allowed to retain her religion, her laws concerning private property, and her forms of administering justice.

Christianity, which, at this time, presented an intolerant race of enthusiasts, with a bishop at their head, unquestionably gave the idea to Mohammedans of a clerical form of government. The Khalif was formed on the model of the Pope. At first the privilege of granting consecrated robes, standards, and scymeters, was all the paramount authority he claimed: but recommendations shortly followed; and, in due succession, claims to the right
of

of investiture of kingdoms. Stealing thus, by degrees, into influence and power, until all the princes of the faith acknowledged themselves vassals.

Arrogance and pride will evermore attend a heavenly-assumed authority: we are not, therefore, surprised at hearing of kings and princes holding the stirrups, and leading the horses of the pontiffs of the Khalifat, or of their having a consecrated cloth of velvet for their subjects to kiss when they performed their obeisance. These are common instances of extravagance — the invariable flatulence of self-sufficiency. It may not, however, be so easily understood, why a spirit of investigation should at the same time be encouraged; or that knowledge, the only weapon capable of hurting superstition, should be sought after and rewarded by the Khalifs, when in the very plenitude of their glory.

The

The vast number of ages, during which the sciences had lain hidden from mankind, had caused a fatal disregard to every species of inquiry. Ignorance had enveloped the greatest part of the race of man. The little that was known was confined to sequestered cells, monasteries, and abbies. Genius had drooped into languor and supineness. Happily the Saracens were the chosen to relumine the world with some of its most valuable and brilliant rays.

The power of the Khalifat no sooner rose in the East, than the morn of an illustrious race of princes broke upon the world. Science now began to rear her head. History, which tells us what we are, and ethics, what we should be, came eagerly to be studied. Even geometry, astronomy, physics, and metaphysics, severally found professors. In short, what from their own stock, and what from the

writings of the Greeks, the followers of Mohammed continued, unto the thirteenth century, to hold the first rank in arts, sciences, and literature. Toward the close of the thirteenth century, indeed, they began to decline; and, at the same æra, Europe, who seemed as if she had been only lulled into sleep, shook off her slumbers. The rise and fall were proportional: Christians, at length, succeeded, and established a supremacy.

Previous to this, the Khalifat had manifested symptoms of decay. Various pretenders to the throne had scattered the seeds of discord and rebellion. Contentions ensued. The Khalif, it is true, was still acknowledged as the representative of their prophet: but the disease had an aspect that was alarming. The same rapid progress which had attended the vicars of God in their exaltation to the Khalifat, now began to exhibit itself in their decline.

decline. They tottered in their pre-eminence ; and, so early even as the expiration of the tenth century, they were seen to shrink under their own grandeur, and to be forgetful of that pristine vigour which had established their empire.

In 1096, a memorable year not only to Mohammedans, but to Christians, the bloody rivalry commenced between the pontiffs of the two communities ; which terminated in the crusades. Peter the hermit, the martial apostle of Christ, as he has been styled, beat the alarm. The council of Placentia, composed of thirty thousand holy and most venerable characters, joined in the opinion of its being greatly expedient, that the followers of Mohammed should be expelled from the holy land. Man, woman, and child, caught the infection. Zeal and extirpation marked the dispositions and the deeds of the knights militant of the cross. Six

millions of deluded heroes are said to have embodied themselves at one time. They poured, as in a mighty torrent, into the lesser Asia; and, as the sacred successor of St. Peter had as widely opened the gates of heaven to Christians as ever the prophet of Arabia had pretended to do to his disciples, the contest became most destructive. Vicar against vicar fulminated wrath and imprecations. Plenary remissions issued from the hands of each. The invaluable possession of the land of Palestine drew forth the most generous blood of the valiant and the brave. God was believed by each party to interest himself in the success of their respective pretensions. The world was in tears; and yet the phrensy was not to cease till near the expiration of the thirteenth century, when almost every thing was wrested from the Saracens.

While

While we cannot but lament that fatal delusion which could operate so strongly on minds, many of them the most amiable and good, we cannot at the same time but acknowledge, that, from the continuance of the struggle, advantages of importance resulted to the inhabitants of the western world ; for great was the want of refinement observable in that part of Europe appertaining to Christians*. The Mohammedans, in those times, were an elegant and an informed people ; while their opponents were, in most respects, but just emerging from barbarism : and it is not venturing too much to say, that the civilization of Christendom, at this

* So late as the days of Henry VIII. of England, it was enacted by that monarch's Council, that none of his Highness's attendants should steal locks or keys, tables, forms, cupboards, or other furniture, out of noblemen's or gentlemen's houses which he should visit. It was likewise fixed, that the Queen's maids of honour should have a chat loaf, a manchet, a gallon of ale, and a chine of beef, for their breakfasts.

day, is owing to the liberality of the Mohammedan Khalifs, who, while they flourished, were patrons of genius. The glory of the Khalifat, however, was doomed to sink, Zingis-Cawn, with his myriads of Tartars, overwhelmed it in the thirteenth century : and Timur-lung, or Tamerlane, completed its destruction in the century succeeding;

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXIV.

WE have anticipated a little, It has been said, that Asia, the seat of the greatest empire, has always been the nurse of the greatest slaves : that the mountains of Persia have not been able to stop the progress of the tide of despotism ; neither has it been frozen in its course through the plains of northern Tartary by the chill airs of the north. The remark is just. The labour and the riches of Asiatics have generally been destined to the purposes of others. History paints this in the strongest colours. We come now to a remarkable instance of it in the followers of Mohammed.

The Mohammedan government, or at least that part of it which afterwards extended itself into Hindostan, arose originally from very small beginnings, among the mountains which divide Persia from India. The Patans, or Affghans, a warlike race, having revolted from the reigning family of Bochara, (themselves revolted from the Khalifat) rebelled under their governor, Abistagi, in the fourth century of the Higeira, and laid the foundation of the empire of Ghizni. In the 390th year of the Higeira, or 1012th of Christ, the reigning prince of this Dynasty of Ghizni (the defection of his family being pardoned) had a Khelaât, or honorary dress, together with the title of king, bestowed upon him by the Khalif of Bagdat. Under the rule of a succession of warlike princes, the empire of Ghizni extended itself from one extremity of Hindostan to the other; so that at the commencement of the sixth century of the

the

the Higeira it reached as far as Ispahan in Persia.

Still rushing on with victory, the armies of Ghizni, in the 589th year of the Higeira, reduced the imperial city of Dehli, a place in which, thirteen years afterwards, an independent sovereignty was established by the viceroy of the Sultunut of Ghizni, Cuttub-ul-Dien; so that, in fact, we must consider Cuttub-ul-Dien as the first monarch of Hindostan of the Mohammedan persuasion. In the 639th of the Higeira, Lahore fell to a considerable body of invaders, (Mongul Tartars) headed by Zingis-Cawn; while another part of their army made an incursion, three years afterwards, into Bengal, by the way of Chitta and Thibet. The 727th of the Higeira saw the Decan, the Carnatic, and all the other countries of the Peninsula of Hindostan, under the dominion

minion of the government of Dehli. Timur-lung, or Timur the lame, commonly called Tamerlane, at last invaded Hindostan; and, in the 800th year of the Higeira, or 1422d of the Christian æra, this firebrand of the world, as he is styled by Eastern historians, with his sanguinary Monguls, having laid waste, sacked and desolated every corner of the empire, at length returned to Samarcand in Touran, retaining the power of confirmation, but declining to nominate a regent of Dehli, who should hold the reins of government in his absence. Three and thirty years after this, a fresh invasion took place under one of Tamerlane's successors; but it proved unsuccessful. The blow, however, was repeated, and the issue proved fortunate. The Tartar government then established itself absolute in India.

Though Tamerlane might have been merciless, (a position which I very much doubt,

doubt, excepting in hard cases of political necessity) the conduct of his successors was benignant and meritorious. Humane and mild, as a writer of those times says, despotism appeared in its most engaging form under the imperial house of Timur. Never to forgive oppressions against the helpless and low, was one of their established maxims; so that Hindostan was rendered, during two centuries, one of the most flourishing countries in the world. Many works of infinite utility and grandeur are still to be traced. Canals of great extent; roads running from one end of the empire to the other; caravanseras, or houses of reception for travellers and merchants; granaries, fortifications, with a vast variety of other buildings, all in that style of magnificence to which the riches of Hindostan were in every respect adequate, but which at the same time was no feeble indication of sagacity

sagacity and refinement in the hardy children of the North.

The imperial house of Timur kept firm possession of the throne of Dehli until the year of Christ 1739, when India was again invaded by Nadir-Shah, king of Persia. This prince, whose steps were marked by blood and destruction, once more overturned the empire. He plundered the capital, and massacred its inhabitants: he then returned to his own country (first having replaced the royal family, whom he had deposed) with a booty, taken, it is said, from Dehli alone, of eighty millions of pounds sterling.

From that dreadful period, the power of the Moguls, which, in the absence of Nadir-Shah, once again shone forth, rapidly fell into decay. Wars and civil discord shook it to its foundation. The
evil

evil daily increased, especially when European influence began to pervade the heterogeneous mass; so that it now may literally be said to be nearly sunk beneath the horizon.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXV.

D'HERBELOT tells us, that a story is recounted of a princess of the Mogul Dynasty, which seems to be insisted on for the honour of the great families, the Turcs, Monguls, and Tartars, who have reigned over Asia. Watching one night in her room, a luminous body invested her on a sudden, and, entering at her mouth, descended into her frame, and thence departed. Repeated nocturnal visitations of this nature were made to her. She often found herself embraced by light, as her wise men could testify, until increasing in size, from a supernatural communication, so extraordinary, she was at length, at the earnest request of her kindred, confined to her chamber, and there brought

brought into the world three sons, who were instantly foretold to be the founders of as many mighty empires.

We have already had occasion to remark on these miraculous interpositions of the Divinity. A heavenly descent is given to almost every founder of an empire. The three dominions of the offspring of this princess, however, have unquestionably arisen; and all being founded in despotism, have each of them been kept in the anointed family, though the chief rule has not descended in hereditary succession, according to the principles recently adopted in Europe; but the Musnud has been filled according to the pleasure of the reigning sovereign, in whom the nomination has been allowed to rest: a prerogative not unessential to the happiness of a people, who live under the lash of an Eastern government; for it has been not unfrequently observed among the very nations
of

of whom we now are speaking, that when hereditary succession has been thought of, sons have cut off their fathers, wearied with expectancy, or possessed of means to struggle for that false, but glittering acquisition, uncontrollable authority.

Under Mohammedan governments it is intended, that no pretensions shall, if possible, be dangerous to the chief magistrate. Rank and station pass not in succession: they are the baubles of the day. The son of a nobleman of the highest consideration has, after the death of his father, nothing but a sphere of indigence and humility to move in. Titles and fortunes fall to Mussulman monarchs by inheritance: they are, in short, the vortex into which every thing is drawn.

From this supereminent power of Mohammedan sovereigns, erected on Tartar ideas, the right of government has generally

rally been admitted inherent in their direction and appointment. The great Cawns of Tartary, from whom they borrowed these ideas, though generally chosen from the sons of the last monarch, are yet never selected on a pretension of primogeniture. Thus Zingis-Cawn nominated his second son, Oçtay, as his successor; a nomination that was confirmed by a diet of the empire. An Emperor of China, in seclusion to his own children, has been known to appoint a Mandarin of ability to fill the throne at his decease. The crown of Yanam, which is in the house of Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed, never descended regularly from father to son; but the prince of the blood royal who had most interest always succeeded. The Kings of Dehli had also the power of leaving their dominions by testamentary appointment. Chizer-Cawn named his successor in the 824th year of the Higeira. Sultan-Beloli did the like

in the 885th of the Higeira; nay, he even divided the empire among his sons; Secundur I. though the youngest of all, having bequeathed to him the throne of India: and were other instances required, we might still bring them nearer to our own times. Mirza-Mahmud was associated by Allyvherde-Cawn in the government of Bengal in 1752, and he nominated him to the Soubahship by will; a rank which he shortly afterwards acceded to, under the title of Surajah-ul-Dowlah.

In the authorities which I have thus given, it may be objected, that nothing has been said of the Turks, or Ottomans, to prove the universality of this custom amongst the children of Islaûm, as they are now called. But the nature of the Turkish government has been too fluctuating to admit of any regular series of rule. It has afforded instances, indeed, similar
to

to those of which we have been speaking; but the general election to the Ottoman throne has been too often and too fatally in the hands of its Janissaries. The Janissaries have raised, and they have deposed, at pleasure.

The high prerogative of devolving sovereignty by appointment, has not, however, been confined to the followers of Mohammed. The Emperors of Rome, who had no male children, nominated their successors by adoption: and to this practice was that mistress of the world indebted for a line of sovereigns unequalled in history: — Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and Marcus Aurelius — “Princes,” exclaims Vattel, “such as the right of birth doth not often place upon a throne!” The custom also prevailed universally throughout Europe for ages after the introduction of Christianity. England, not very long ago, was regulated in the suc-

cession of its sovereign by will. But Charles II. of Spain transferring his vast dominions to the Duke of Anjou, and Peter the Great leaving the empire of the Russias to his wife, in preference to his son, are striking instances of such modern date, that no other need be required to prove the existence of testamentary appointments among Heathens and Christians, as well as amongst the followers of Mohammed *.

* Wills and testaments, rights of inheritance, and successions, are creatures of the civil or municipal laws, and, accordingly, are in all respects regulated by them; every distinct country having different ceremonies and requisites to make a testament completely valid: neither does any thing vary more than the right of inheritance, under different national establishments. Hence it follows, that, where the appointment is regularly made, there cannot be a shadow of right in any one but the person appointed.

BLACKSTONE.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXVI.

MOHAMMEDAN maxims of policy, founded on the simple idea of a sovereign master and of subject slaves, are averse from those essential and necessary checks to the supreme authority, which are observable in other countries. Every thing rests with the prince who rules. The Koran, indeed, prescribes the law; but the execution of it depends on the will of the magistrate: his word is paramount either to law or precept.

This absolute, this uncontrollable authority, has been the cause of the most bloody tragedies in Mohammedan countries. The author of the *Nighiaristaun* relates an anecdote of a holy Khalif of

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the

the Abbajfides, which exhibits it in its most horrid form. “Thou feest that
 “traitor, Jaiher,” said he to an officer standing by him, “the son of Khaled,
 “my prime minister, whom I have imprisoned. He is my declared enemy:
 “he spares no pains to deprive me of the affection of my people: he tries all
 “methods to raise an insurrection in favour of my brother, Haroun. Go you
 “to the prison where the old Khaled is confined, and send me immediately his
 “head. Thence proceed to the house of my brother, whom you will also
 “dispatch. After that, put all to the sword of the family of Ali: and, as
 “your last act, march at the head of a select body of troops, surprise the city
 “of Coufah, and reduce it to ashes, with all its inhabitants, excepting the
 “race of the Abbajfides.”

Instances

Instances similar to this, indeed, have not been so frequent as generally supposed. Probably they have not been more frequent than similar ones have been, which are unfortunately to be traced in almost every history, from that of the divine Moses, to the annals of the present age. "Now," said Samuel unto Saul, "go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling. And Saul gathered the people together, and smote the Amalekites."

Acts of generosity and of real magnanimity are, however, to be met with among Mohammedans, as well as those of a contrary complexion. "Though I have a thousand in my army as good men as you are," said the Emperor Akbar, in a message to a revolted subject,

“ rather than injure any one of them by
 “ keeping them in the field, I will put
 “ the whole upon the issue of a single
 “ combat between you and me, and let
 “ him be the victor who shall best de-
 “ serve it.” Aurungzebe, who ruled
 over Hindostan with great renown in the
 latter end of the seventeenth century,
 having sent an ambassador to Shaw-Abbas,
 King of Persia, and a letter, superscribed,
 “ From the Emperor of the World to
 “ the Master of Persia,” the latter, on
 his reception of the ambassador, expressed
 his indignation at the insolence of the ex-
 pression : but, mildly turning to his cour-
 tiers, “ Let the ambassador,” said he,
 “ be treated with kindness and hospita-
 “ lity ; though I own not the title of
 “ Aurungzebe to the world, he yet has a
 “ claim to his subjects’ services. Let the
 “ impious son, the inhuman brother, the
 “ murderer of his family, however, be
 “ told,

“ told, that, though his crimes have
 “ rendered him Master of Hindoostan,
 “ there is still a Lord over Persia, who
 “ detests his duplicity, and despises his
 “ power. Return to him his presents,
 “ and, with them, let him purchase the
 “ favour of those who are not shocked at
 “ his guilt. Abbas, whose hands are
 “ clean, shudders at the iniquity of a
 “ prince, covered with the blood of his
 “ relations.”

Were any other proof of Mohammedan
 magnanimity necessary, it might readily
 be adduced. The Emperor Saladin, not
 less glorious than Cyrus, when nearly
 expiring, at Damascus, ordered the shroud
 in which his remains were to be interred,
 to be exposed to public view, while a
 crier was to pronounce, “ This is all that
 “ remains to the mighty Saladin, the
 “ Emperor of the East.” He even went
 farther,

farther, and, in the true and genuine spirit of the gospel itself, directed charities to be distributed indiscriminately to Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXVII.

WE have already trod upon the confines of the haram. To its inner parts, when inhabited, there is no access. The hints that we have already gathered, therefore, are all the lights that we can throw upon a subject, so carefully veiled from the unhallowed investigation of all who are without the pale of Mohammedanism. The general style of Eastern manners, however, that hath hitherto been but imperfectly understood, is such, as to deserve a little more than cursory observation.

From current report, as hath already been remarked, slavery undoubtedly appears the portion of the women. High
walls

walls and strong bars invariably entomb them: nor can they be looked upon in any other point of view, than that of creatures of their tyrant's will. But, wretched as these captives are, they still have some little comforts, which render their situation not intolerably irksome. Their influence in state affairs is very considerable: nor are they much less acquainted with the general occurrences of the world than other females are, who, in the blessings of unfettered liberty, are, jointly with the men, partakers of the pleasures of society.

The laws and manners of a nation, when rightly understood, will readily reconcile these seeming contradictions. The Mohammedan, it is true, admits of the propriety of a plurality of wives; and, in the excess of voluptuousness, the free and boundless enjoyment of sequestered beauty:

beauty: holding it conformable to patriarchal usage —

“ When man on many multiply’d his kind,
 “ Ere one to one was cursedly confin’d ;
 “ When nature prompted, and no law deny’d,
 “ Promiscuous use of concubine and bride.”

DRYDEN.

He is peculiarly tender, however, of the ladies of the haram; extending respect and veneration even to those of an enemy: whereas the very refined Christian, who, as he observes, attaches himself to the silken shackles of a single connection, is yet oftentimes inattentive to the abuse with which his bed is stained. The Moham-
 medan, then, in whose opinion adultery is an unpardonable offence, may, on principles of modesty, decency, and other considerations, be in some respects defended. He holds virtue to depend on the prevention of intercourse and opportunity: but, above all, seclusion is ordained to true believers

lievers in the Koran of the most holy prophet.

In Mohammedan Asia, however, there have been exceptions, and those too of a commanding nature, which have combated the established system of immuring women in the seraglio. Instances have been known where the restraints imposed upon them have been burst, and where females of the highest rank and pretensions have not only appeared in private to the male friends of their families, but even in public, to the astonishment indeed at first, but, afterwards, to the admiration of a people both bigoted and tenacious. One shall serve our present purpose. It was in the person of the Queen of the Emperor Iehangire : a princess, whose story has employed the pens of poets and historians, and the singular vicissitudes of whose life are worthy to be recorded.

To

To give a proper idea of this extraordinary woman, it will be necessary to go a little farther back than the æra when she appeared as Empress of the East. Her father was by birth a Tartar, and of a noble family; but, as frequently is the case among those wandering tribes of Scythia, the patrimony he inherited was inconsiderable. The pride of blood, however, kept him superior to his fortune. His genius taught him to feel that there was scarcely any thing beyond the reach of man; he therefore resolutely determined on cultivating the understanding he was master of, and which he knew to be good, though it was wild. Impressed thus with a spirit of enterprize, and a thirst for knowledge, Haja-Ayafs eagerly began on the essential and preparatory steps for the object he had in view; and, in a short time, having so far succeeded as to excel in all the manly, martial exercises of the field, as well as in the cooler
and

and more deliberate business of the cabinet, he chearfully collected the little fortune he was master of, discharged the debts with which he was encumbered, and, having bade adieu to his companions, he departed, in a truly primitive style, for the deserts which separate Tartary from Hindostan; his wife, a horse, and a few days provision, being the only treasure he could call his own.

Directed by a knowledge of the planets, the commencement of his journey was prosperous. The glowing expectation of advancement in a land flowing with milk and honey, made him inattentive to little difficulties. He already, in imagination, felt himself possessed of consequence and riches. The glad tidings, he supposed, communicated to his friends; and he enjoyed, in thought, the services he should be enabled to render to his family: but the fairy wanderings of delusive fancy are frequently

frequently preludes to the keenest grief. "To heaven they raise us, but to plunge us deeper in despair." Unhappily for him, the season of the year was far advanced; the windings of the desert became at every step more intricate; his provisions began to fail: no homely roofs were in sight, which could either yield succour or refreshment: the sun, too, in his annual progress, had arrived in that situation in the heavens, from whence he darted his fiercest rays; and the wife of his bosom was in hourly expectation of presenting him with a pledge of their affections.

Three days he continued in this situation; when, on the fourth, and when his store was quite exhausted, heaven, as in mockery, made him the father of a daughter. In this event, indeed, the cup of his afflictions was bitterly overflowed. But the rational mind is not to be frightened

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from

from its native dignity. He saw the horrors with which he was surrounded : his heart bled at them, as a man, as a husband, and as a parent ; but complaint was unavailing, and no resource was in despair. With a determined soul, therefore, and with a countenance serene and awfully resigned, he softly withdrew his daughter from his wife, who, from excess of languor, had fallen into a sleep, and gathering for it the largest portion of the little valuables he had left, he placed it, with its humble fortune, under the shelter of a bush. “ God may send thee aid,” cried he ; “ I cannot. Thou mayest be found
 “ by travellers able to assist thee. Charity may prompt them to befriend thee.
 “ If thou goest in these arms, thou wilt
 “ fall by famine. Thy mother is almost
 “ dead, and my hour comes with haste
 “ upon me. Fare thee well ! Blessings
 “ unheard of yet be showered upon thee.
 “ Providence is merciful ; and thy help-
 “ less

“less innocence is surely worthy of its
 “protection.” More he would have
 said, but grief stopped farther utterance.

Placing, therefore, his wife upon his
 faithful horse, who, with hunger, stood
 tottering beside him, and soothing her
 with promising to be himself the bearer
 of their hapless infant, he once more es-
 sayed the pathless wastes of sand by which
 they were surrounded. Scarce had they
 gone a mile, before maternal tenderness
 awaked a spark of life in the almost-expi-
 ring mother. Falteringly she called for
 her daughter: she begged to see her child
 — to have it put into her arms, that, after
 a last embrace, she might quietly resign
 her life to him who gave it.

Almost exhausted from the struggles
 which had past, this fond request was as a
 dagger to the soul of Haja-Ayals. His
 wonted tenderness poured in torrents round

his heart : his purposes began to fail him : he burst into lamentation, and, while confessing the resolution he had made, he hastily, and, in trembling agitation, returned to the smiling victim he had deserted. Never did a prodigal's return so exultingly rejoice a father, as did the re-possession of this little innocent. He greedily snatched it to his breast, and flying with it to its mother, was so entranced by the most exquisite of pure delights, that he had nearly overlooked a caravan which suddenly appeared, and moved to the very spot where the emaciated mother and child lay, wretched objects of compassion.

Aroused from his delirium, Haja-Ayafs, approaching towards the chieftain of the tribe, in a few words informed him of the distresses he had endured ; and then pointing to what was nearest, and dearest to his heart, he looked, and sighed a prayer,

prayer, which, being interpreted, was, "Feed them, or they perish." Happily for our wanderers, the clan they fell in with was commanded by a humane and tender-minded being; and one, too, who was journeying to the place where all their prospects centered. By the unre-mitted care of this their heaven-presented friend, they at last perfectly recovered; and, by easy stages, in a short time afterwards, safely arrived at Lahore, at that time the residence of the Emperor of Hindostan.

The intimacy which Haja-Ayafs had with some of the principal Tartars in the Emperor's service, soon procured him the honour of an introduction to their sovereign, and afterwards to an employ, which, though trifling in its emoluments, was still sufficient to support him and his family, and in some degree to bring him into notice. The active disposition, un-

dissipated in its pursuits, seldom fails of accomplishing its ends. Haja-Ayals was not long in verifying this. He quickly advanced from one station to another, every day growing higher in his master's favour, till he arose to the pinnacle of Asiatic power, the office of Grand Treasurer of the empire. During this time his family increased; but the little Rose-tree of the Desert blossomed with peculiar lustre: her beauty improved as her years advanced towards maturity: her mental qualifications kept pace with her external perfections; and she had barely attained her sixteenth year, when she was acknowledged to be the most lovely, as well as the most accomplished, female of the East. Music and poetry were her favourite amusements: painting also claimed a considerable share of her attention; nor were the less-alluring studies of politics, history, and government, neglected at her intervals of leisure.

Thus

Thus formed, and thus accomplished, and with a soul expanded to an high degree of ambitious resolution, this formidable fair one determined on the conquest of Ichangire, the heir apparent of the empire. Unluckily for her plan, her father had already promised her in marriage to a nobleman of great distinction; one whose exploits had resounded through the kingdom, and who was at this time a favourite of the Emperor. As we have already remarked, mutual inclination can never be considered in Mohammedan alliances; for the parties knowing each other only by report, are necessarily constrained to yield an implicit obedience to the orders of their parents. This being the case, the heroine of our tale was under the cruel necessity of complying with her father's wishes. The day was fixed, and the marriage solemnized, with rejoicings suitable to the wealth and consequence of the families.

Previous to this, however, she contrived a method of throwing herself, as if by accident, into the presence of the young and amorous Iehangire. The scheme was executed with dexterity; and at the very moment that the young prince, entertained by her father, was listening with profound attention to the overflowing tenderness of a parent, who gloried in the possession of such a daughter. The praises Haja-Ayafs bestowed upon her, awakened every impetuous desire of youth. At every word the maddening particles of love accumulated. In short, the citadel of his heart was undermined, and nothing but the fire of the most brilliant eyes in nature was wanting to level him a slave for ever.

As if conscious of a trespass of the most unpardonable nature, she no sooner found herself in the same apartment with Iehangire, than she appeared rivetted, as
it

it were, in motionless confusion : — her tongue faltered : — she attempted to return, but could not : — she looked for pity and forgiveness from her father ; and at last sunk into his arms with a face suffused in bashfulness and tears. Thus assaulted by surprise, how was the already-enraptured Iehangire to defend or shelter himself from the attack ? The beauty of her person and the embellishments of her mind he had recently been informed of ; but words had been inadequate — No description could equal the transcendancy of her charms. Fluttering, therefore, in agonies of expiring freedom, the young prince respectfully approached the sofa where she lay reclining on her father's bosom, and, after having apologized for the pain which he had innocently been the cause of, he said, “ He would hope
 “ that so much perfection would not refuse to utter his forgiveness. That his
 “ crime, in being accidentally in her presence,
 “ fence;

“fence, was truly of a venial nature;
 “but if it was not, that it carried the
 “severity of its punishment in itself.”
 With this, and with a downcast look,
 he retired, and hastily returned to his
 palace.

But sumptuous glare has little soothing
 in it to a wounded mind. Iehangire,
 however, conscious of his own superiority
 and power, was yet distracted. He knew
 the engagements which Haja-Ayafs had
 entered into with respect to his daughter:
 he knew the inflexible nicety of his ho-
 nour; nor was he unacquainted with the
 high reputation of the man destined to be
 the husband of this paragon of the East.
 Several days and nights he continued in
 the most excruciating torment. No stra-
 tagem, however wild, that unbridled pas-
 sion could devise for breaking off the
 match, but occurred to his imagina-
 tion. At one time he would throw him-
 self

self at Akbar his father's feet, and implore his interference ; at another he would procure the banishment of his rival ; but all was ineffectual. While he plotted, the nuptials were celebrated ; and he then, in a paroxysm of rage, descended to the unworthy resolution of persecuting a man who was chargeable with no other crime than that (inexpiable indeed to some minds) of being more fortunate than himself.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXVIII.

THE intrigues of an Eastern court are more quickly productive of consequences than those of any other court whatever. The husband of our heroine, greatly respected and beloved, soon came to the knowledge of the steps that were taking against him. Wherefore, conscious of incapacity, when no less than royal machinations were to be circumvented, he suddenly, and with the utmost privacy, taking his wife along with him, fled to an asylum, which he knew would secure him from the persecution of his enemies. At this place Shere-Cawn (for such was his name) continued till the death of Akbar : nor would he then have quitted his retirement, had he not been earnestly so-

licited to return to Lahore by Ichangire himself, now Emperor, and by Haja-Ayafs, who still kept possession of the office of High Treasurer.

The return of Shere to the royal presence was followed by rejoicings, and by the warmest demonstrations of attachment in Ichangire. Nothing was too honourable for a man whom he had premeditatedly injured. He felt that he had acted unbecoming the dignity of a prince, and therefore resolved to make as public and as complete a retribution as the nature of his situation would admit. In this manner matters rolled in a channel of harmony and good will. Shere every day enjoyed new happiness in his family; and Ichangire felt himself exalted in the victory he had gained over a passion which had subdued him in the beginning. But this monarch's nature was intemperate, fickle, and irresolute. The whole tenor of his actions

actions pointed to a levity, which it was impossible to reconcile with reason. His virtues, indeed, were many and splendid, and worthy of a sovereign: but the opposite shades in his character were fatally predominant. They blurred the portrait, which would otherwise have been fair, and tinged it with indelible deformity.

Thus, at the very instant that he showered his royal favours on the head of Shere, a horrid jealousy was engendering in his mind, fraught with injury and blood. Possibly he perceived it not. His after-conduct admits the intervention of a doubt. However that may be, the friends of death were not long unappealed to. They were roused from their dark retreats, and, in various windings, were turned loose on the devoted Shere. Openly, or covertly, Shere saw himself threatened with an ignominious fall. He was no stranger to the cause; nor did he conceive
it

it possible to avoid the storm which was impending. As a man, therefore, he resolved to meet his fate with resignation; and as he had lived with glory, so to conduct himself in the last act of his existence as not to tarnish it with disreputation: nor was it long before the opportunity presented itself.

Were we in this place to follow with implicit credit the panegyrists of this extraordinary man, we should paint, in more than commonly marvellous colours, the amazing prowess and dexterity with which he defeated the base intentions of the king; but a simple display of facts is all we pretend to. Poets are warranted to indulge in fiction: we are prescriptively confined to a less fertile walk.

Baffled in all their trials, the enemies of Shere at length became atrociously violent. No poison, or mode of assassination,

tion, was left untried. Their last resort was treacherously to steal upon and murder him in his sleep. Retired to his chamber, with no other guard about his house than his domestics, and apprehending nothing within the sacred confines of the Zunnana, he there was yielding himself to rest, when he was suddenly alarmed by the sound of feet approaching towards his bed. A few moments he listened; but the sound discontinued. At length he heard a voice, which, as if under the influence of honor, said, "What, shall so many of us fall upon one poor, unarmed man, and he asleep? No: let him awake, and let him have a trial for his life." — "Gallantly imagined," cried Shere, springing from his bed. "Whoever thou art, as a friend, I thank thee. Come on! The conflict is indeed unequal: but Allah may yet be favourable to the innocent." With this, grasping his simitar,

tar, and darting amidst his opponents, he instantly laid two of them breathless at his feet ; then pushing at the rest, he infallibly had done the same by them ; but the noise had roused a servant, who, almost worn away with age, slept in an adjoining room. Readily conceiving the danger of his master, the old man hastened to his presence as fast as his feeble limbs would let him. His coming startled the assassins : they feared they were beset : and, rushing to the door, they precipitately fled, leaving half their companions weltering on the floor, while Achmet and his lord remained unconquered and unhurt. But the day was approaching, when courage and fortitude were to be of no avail.

Incessantly kept in this anxious state of watchfulness for his safety, and well knowing that at Lahore he hourly ran the risque of suffering either by treachery or force,

he came to the resolution of once more retiring from the presence of Iehangire. Accordingly, having procured the Emperor's permission, he began his journey towards the frontiers of a province, of which he had some time been the governor; but he had not proceeded far, when he found himself attacked by a considerable body of armed ruffians. The die was now thrown: he faced, however, his antagonists, who were masked, and fought them bravely. The superiority of numbers at last overcame him: wherefore, turning himself towards Mecca, and throwing some dust over his head, (not having water for that last and most solemn act,) he unconcernedly called upon them to be expeditious in their bloody purpose.

The solicitation was obeyed: they pierced him with a multitude of wounds; and he thus, uncomplaining, sunk the martyr of a monarch's passion.

Happy,

Happy, indeed, were it, if this were the only instance which history hands down to us of the jealous phrenzy of a king; and that an Eastern tale were the only monument of such dastardly extravagance. But the annals of almost every nation are melancholy records of equal, if not of more atrocious acts. Those even of our own country are sufficiently stained with the licentiousness of a Henry, and the sufferings of the innocent.

“ O piteous lot of man’s uncertain state!
 “ What woes on life’s unhappy journey wait!
 “ When joyful hope would grasp its fond desire,
 “ The long-sought transports in the grasp expire.
 “ By sea, what treacherous calms, what rushing storms,
 “ And death attendant in a thousand forms!
 “ By land, what strife, what plots of secret guile,
 “ How many a wound from many a treacherous smile!
 “ O where shall man escape his numerous foes,
 “ And rest his weary head in safe repose?”

LUSIAD.

No sooner had the news of the death of Shere reached Lahore, than his widow was ordered to be conveyed to Dehli.

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There

There she arrived, and, with unaffected grief, bewailed the loss of one, who had ever behaved to her with tenderness, and whose unhappy fate she could not but look upon as occasioned by the fatal influence of her own charms, too unwarily exposed. The Empress Dowager, and mother of Iehangire, received her with kindness and affection. She assuaged the melancholy which preyed upon her: she seldom left her to herself: she varied the amusements with which she entertained her; and thus, by degrees, reconciled her to her situation.

How far the respect that was justly due to this good old princess affected the conduct of Iehangire, who now himself resided at Dehli, the writers of his life pretend not to determine. Certain it is, he refrained from seeing the object of his passion for a considerable time after she was in his power. Remorse, indeed, or instability

instability of temper, might have occasioned this forbearance. Whatsoever it was, the effect was the same. She continued undisturbed; and he was applauded for his resolution.

But when, contrary to his usual munificence, he was observed to stint her in the stipend which was given her from the royal treasury; from an ample allowance to reduce her to almost bread and water; and from the conveniences of an elegant palace to drive her to the wretched shelter of an unfurnished, miserable apartment, the opinion of the world began to alter. Though under an arbitrary government, they could not refrain from loudly censuring such extraordinary severity. Her own merit, Fame allowed to be sufficient to entitle her to gentle treatment and humanity. Her father, too, was before their eyes, grown grey in the service of the family of the very prince by whom she

was oppressed ; and the remembrance of her husband was not easily to be obliterated from their minds. But ineffectual are the strictures of the subject, when opposed to the absolute authority of the sovereign. Iehangire persevered in unmanly persecutions : he even refined on the rigours of tyranny and oppression.

Reduced at length to the severity of want, and finding there was no likelihood of an end to the injuries with which she was so unjustly loaded, she saw it was necessary to attempt something which should furnish her with what she stood in need of — sustenance and cloathing. Embroidery, therefore, in her happier days, the amusement of her idle hours, but now the only support she had to look to, became her constant occupation. The sale of the first piece of silk which she could finish, enabled her to purchase materials for a larger work. This she in like man-

ner completed and disposed of; and thus, from the labour of her hands, finding some alleviation to her misery, she began with a greater degree of calmness to bear the rigours of her confinement, and even in some manner to resume her wonted spirit and vivacity.

Four years did this fallen meteor work and support herself by her own industry. Her wealth even increased to a degree of affluence; inasmuch, that she was enabled to adorn the apartment which was allotted to her, and to dress her attendants with a decency, which in some degree recalled to her her former splendor. Awakened at length by the continual praises which were bestowed upon his captive, both by his mother and such others of the haram as were witnesses of her conduct, Iehangire determined upon paying her a private and unexpected visit. To this end, he repaired to the seraglio at an hour when he

was certain to be unobserved ; and thence passing along, whilst his eunuchs stared at him in mute astonishment, he came to the solitary room which confined this object of admiration. There he found her.

Uninformed of the intentions of the Emperor, and not expecting visitors, she carelessly sat reclining on an embroidered sofa, the work of her own hands, dressed in unwrought muslin of the plainest and most simple texture ; whilst her maidens were seated all around her variously employed : some in the execution of the patterns she had given them ; others in preparing for the work : but all in apparel far superior to their mistress.

So strange a sight astonished Iehangire ; but the divine deportment of his prisoner was still more attractive of admiration. She arose as he approached her — surprise and indignation evidently painted in her
counte-

countenance : but the liveliness of her feelings seemed only the more to irradiate her beauty. Iehangire accosted her with respect, mingled with symptoms of contrition. He intreated her to be patient for a moment, to hear what he had to advance in his defence ; to judge him then with candour and impartiality ; and finally, to condemn him, if his guilt admitted not of extenuation. Thus preparing his way with humility, and a show of sorrow for what was past, Iehangire began his vindication. Here, indeed, he found a multitude of difficulties, that were not easily to be surmounted. The death of her husband, and her own imprisonment, were not readily to be forgiven. Besides, he had reduced her to a state of indigence, and had driven her to seek for bread at the labour of her hands.

But the arguments of an accomplished and despotic sovereign are seldom found to fail

fail of carrying persuasion, when artfully introduced, and properly supported by unblushing assertions, promises, and positive asseverations of the innocency of intentions. Ichangire was perfectly acquainted with the advantages he possessed; and he applied them with the dexterous management of a master of the art. In short, so effectually did he clear himself of the atrocious accusation of having been the murderer of Sbere-Cawn, and so firmly did he convince his mistress, now no longer slave, that the rigour of her confinement had been owing to the foul aspersions of a few, who were her enemies, and not to the natural dictates of his own immediate inclination, that she at length yielded her assent to the burying of what was past in the most profound oblivion.

This point accomplished, the Emperor had still another in view, which had evidently stronger barriers to oppose it. This

was

was no other than to gain her consent to the completion of the union he had so eagerly panted for, four years before; but this was not to be hazarded at the moment. He carelessly, therefore, began upon some other topic of conversation. He talked to her of the different occurrences of the empire; and, as if it were a matter of only common import, dwelt on the increase and consequence which he had himself already drawn to the dominions of the Moguls.

In this manner was this fair one entertained until the evening drew on apace. The Emperor then got up, and respectfully took his leave; but, stopping suddenly, "How comes it, my fair sufferer," said he, "that thy attendants are so sumptuously attired, and that thou thyself art so humbly and so modestly adorned?" — "Such is the lot of servitude, my Lord," said she. —

" Their

" Their state is not different from mine :
 " I strive to alleviate their bondage, in-
 " deed, by every kindness in my power ;
 " and therefore give them garments,
 " which, to please me, they wear ;
 " whilst I, in obedience to my master,
 " am reduced to the necessity of appear-
 " ing in that style, which the means he
 " has supplied me with seem to have
 " marked out as his royal pleasure."
 " Cutting, but too indelible reproach,"
 replied Iehangire. " I cannot deny my
 " unworthiness ; but you can revenge
 " yourself, most injured excellence. The
 " means are amply in your power. I
 " can hold no longer. Affection, and a
 " regard to form, had determined me to
 " continue silent, until time had some-
 " what restored me to your esteem ; but
 " the flame which has long been pent up,
 " will burst its way. I must be plain.
 " Love and distraction have long been the
 " tormentors of my life. From the first
 " moment

“ moment I beheld you, I passionately
“ resolved on calling you my own. I
“ strove to accomplish the fond purpose
“ by every exertion of absolute autho-
“ rity. I stuck not even at unworthy
“ means to allure you to my arms ; but
“ fate interposed and snatched from me
“ the bliss. Again awakened to a sweet
“ gleam of hope, kindneſſes and repen-
“ tance I flattered myself would work
“ for me forgiveness ; but the dream is
“ no ſooner riſen, than it is vaniſhed.
“ I ſee my fate, and I deſerve it : yet,
“ ere you pronounce my doom, vouch-
“ ſafe to liſten to the ſolemn aſſeveration,
“ which it is eſſential I ſhould make to
“ you. I never meant otherwiſe than
“ tenderly and honourably by my attach-
“ ment : my conduct, while I have been
“ maſter of your perſon, can teſtify it.
“ My throne I wiſhed to ſhare with you ;
“ but the illuſion is, I fear, too fatally at
“ an end. Punish me then. More than
“ any

“ any being under Heaven, you can retaliate the injuries you have sustained, by refusing to be the Queen of Iehangire.”

This was a stroke our heroine did not immediately expect. It startled her for the moment; but she soon recollected herself. “ No, my Lord,” said she. “ Our holy prophet teaches us to resent an injury in a juster manner. Your slave is the subject of your will. If you have injured me, your gracious condescension is now more than recompence sufficient. I had, indeed, resolved to remain single and retired; but the commands of my sovereign have ever been to me a law, next to those of Allah, of the most sacred obligation.” With this, a blush suffused itself across her cheek. The Emperor, in transport, snatched her to his heart. Orders were instantly issued for the solemnization

lemnization of their nuptials; and the next day they were married. Thus, like the sweet shrub which sheds its best influence on the hand of him who tears it from its soil, this extraordinary woman revenged herself on Iehangire.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXIX.

ARISEN from the shades of oblivion, this brilliant planet once more illumined with resplendency the haram. Her old companions rejoiced at the alteration of her situation; and those who envied her happiness, were compelled to silence from a dread of her displeasure. Noor-Iehan, or the Light of the World, for with this title the Emperor dignified her, soon became supreme in the affections of her husband. The talents, which had long lain hidden in mournful solitude, had ripened by reflection. Study had taught her the way of reading the various tempers and characters of the world. She was well acquainted with the nature and the extent of the genius of him to whom she

was

was allied ; and, in the discharge of her duty, she saw the certain means of acquiring an irresistible ascendancy.

Possessed, thus, of a jewel, the most inestimable in his realm, Iehangire thankfully admitted the assistance of Noor-Iehan in the fatiguing management of the affairs of state. Her breast, in his anxious moments, became the depository of his most secret thoughts : he concealed nothing from her ; and seldom acted but when her opinion entirely coincided with his own. In short, she was a second self, the conjunct ruler of the empire. Coins were even struck, and made current in her name. Nor, in doing this, will the candour of history allow that Iehangire was actuated either by indolence or indiscretion. Her father was still in office : her brothers likewise filled the first dignities of the state. These were her oracles in matters of importance ; and their ho-

nour and ability, spurning at little adulation, screened both her and the Emperor from falsehood and imposition.

But the days of man are as strongly marked with vicissitudes as the fluctuating atmosphere by which he is surrounded. Kings themselves, the anointed of heaven, are not exempt from the calamities of human nature. The splendor of their state serves but to aggravate their misfortune. With a partner on his throne, deservedly the object of his admiration, and with a dominion nearly as great and splendid as any in the world, Iehangire might naturally be supposed to have arrived at the pinnacle of earthly happiness; but the turbulence of faction engendered a counterpoise to his felicity.

An Umrah, of considerable wealth and consequence in the empire, suddenly conceived

ceived a jealousy of the intentions of his master. Insinuations of pretended friends, joined to apprehensions in his own family, first sounded to him the alarm. Warped by personal fears, every action of the Emperor seemed, to his mind, distorted in its appearance. He began to look upon the caresses of his sovereign as the premeditated snares of a politician, alluring him to destruction. He doubted him in every instance; and at length breaking through all restraint, he rebelliously appeared in arms, and, by a quick movement, made himself master of the person of Iehangire.

No sooner was it spread abroad that Iehangire was in the custody of this Umrah, than troops from all quarters hastened to the imperial standard, erected under the auspices of Noor-Iehan. Crouds from all sides poured in to her assistance. She soon saw herself at the head of a con-

fiderable army ; and, from that moment, despising all the impertinencies of form, she publicly appeared before her troops mounted on an elephant of war, with her daughter by her side ; a bow with arrows were slung on her shoulder ; and in this manner, in person, she intrepidly led on her troops to action.

The forces of the imperial army, actuated in defence of a descendant of the race of Timur, sprung to the charge with a vivacity that carried every thing before it. Carnage spread on every side. The Queen, by her looks and gestures, encouraged her warriors. A merciless devastation took place. The rebels staggered at every onset ; but still kept firm to the combat. At length, a river being forded by the Umrah, on the opposite banks of which he drew up in array of battle, the Queen directed the driver of her elephant to plunge into the midst of the stream.

Her

Her generals, animated by the example, with sword in hand rushed to the succour of their mistress. Every thing gave way before them, and victory hovered over the banner of the empire ; but, unhappily at this moment, an arrow pierced the bosom of the youthful princess. The lustre of her eyes became transfused with darkness. In the excruciating agony of pain, she bounded from her seat, and, seemingly lifeless, dropt into her mother's arms.

What a sense of her own danger could not accomplish, maternal tenderness instantly effected. Noor-Iehan allowed herself to be carried from the spot ; but not until she had implored her officers to be resolute and faithful to the cause of their royal master ; but the fate of the day had already taken a turn. The imperialists, exhausted by their first exertions, now began to languish in their attacks. They had rather lost ground than

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otherwise.

otherwise. The victory was yet undecided; and the enemy had suffered less in numbers than they had. To this state were they reduced. The Umrah expected it; and, for this purpose, had cautiously kept back some chosen battalions from the action. On these he depended for success. He now saw the critical moment; and placing himself, therefore, at the head of this body of reserve, he fell upon the loyalists with such an unexpected shock, that they universally gave way, and in a few seconds left him the decided master of the field.

Defeated thus in her heroic intention of rescuing Ichangire, and afflicted with apprehensions for her daughter's life, Noor-Iehan had a trying character to assume, not only with her friends, but more immediately with those whose spirits she had to support, and on whose services she was to depend on a future day. Some time elapsed

elapfed in this trying fituation. At length the princefs happily recovered of her wound: but ftill the Emperor was confined; and until he was released from bondage, Noor-Iehan had neither comfort nor tranquillity.

Watched with the clofeft attention, and perceiving no profpect of release, Iehangire at laft propofed a fcheme, which he flattered himfelf would accord with the views of the Umrah and his party. This was no lefs than to delegate to thofe whom they fhould nominate, the abfolute government of the empire. The terms, as he conceived, were accepted. The appointments immediately took place; and he, in language the moft preffing, wrote to Noor-Iehan, and befeeched her to difband her army; urged her to come and complete his happinefs by her prefence; affured her that every attention would be paid to her; and, as matters regarded himfelf,

to be certain that she would find him treated with the utmost tenderness and respect.

The word of Iehangire was sufficient command to Noor-Iehan. Agreeably to his directions, she dismissed the legions that attended her; and, without the smallest diffidence or hesitation, repaired to the place where the Umrah was encamped. No reception could ever have been more honourable or brilliant than that which was studiously given to Noor-Iehan. The Umrah waited upon her himself, as had been his province in the days of her greatest glory. He pleaded contrition for his recent transgressions; and, without being urged to it, promised what he had hitherto evaded, the complete enlargement of the Emperor. Accustomed as she was to courts, and to all the windings and duplicity of intrigue, this seeming ingenuousness of the Umrah's
had

had almost deceived her into a belief that he was sincere ; but the delusions of safety were not capable of divesting her entirely of suspicion. She saw, or thought she saw, a design in the wily traitor, to consign her to the custody of a band of his adherents, whom he speciously dignified with the appellation of officers of his household.

In this new imprisonment, (for her fears were too justly founded) Noor-Iehan experienced every species of grief, anguish, and vexation. She was even precluded the sight of Iehangire ; but the blackest act of the drama was yet to be exhibited. Too well acquainted with the excessive sway which the Queen bore over the mind of Iehangire, and dreading lest, in restoring her, with his sovereign, to liberty, he might himself eventually fall a sacrifice to her resentment ; and seeing, in no alternative but her death,

that

that safety, which he was determined to be careful of, the Umrah resolved to have her strangled while she thus was in his power; and that too under the sanction, and with the authority of law. For this purpose a tribunal was erected, and he himself arraigned her of high treason, and of having conspired against the life of her lord and sovereign, the Emperor.

Readily may it be supposed that the sentence of the judges was conformable to the will of him who was the leader of their faction, and who had pre-determined on her fall. She was adjudged to death, and a single day was given her for preparation. Justice, the purest emanation of the Divinity! — Justice is thus tortured to assist the dark and monstrous designs of the wicked and ambitious! Sent down from heaven, a little while she continued among men. The earth smiled with benignity and cheerfulness; but revenge, rapacity,

rapacity, each child of enormity and guilt, rushed in upon her calm reign, and despoiled us of her influence. Meant to be the shield of virtue, her hallowed name was suddenly called to the support of profligacy and licentiousness. Right and wrong indiscriminately became deduced from her sacred fountain. The mummery of externals attracted consideration; but the essence itself lay neglected and unnoticed.

Armed in this manner with the power of the law, and bent upon the speedy completion of the bloody deed, the unfeeling Umrah carried the warrant of execution to the Emperor for the royal assent and signature. Depressed with grief, driven almost to madness, the wretched Iehangire looked at the horrid instrument with tears, while drops of blood ran trickling from his heart. O, there's an awful greatness in mighty woe! But he knew
the

the sternness of the character he had to deal with: he saw that inevitable death awaited Noor-Iehan; that he was unable to save her; that opposition would but draw forth torture and base indignity. With a fullen moroseness, therefore, and a proud, unyielding spirit, as if for his own execution, he signified his assent; and then preparing himself for assassination, most fervently prayed for the stroke which should terminate his miseries.

The news of the Emperor's having given his consent to her execution being communicated to Noor-Iehan, she received it (for she readily conceived the reasons which wrung it from him) with the most respectful silence, and with a dignity of countenance which bespoke a soul resolved upon submitting to her fate with resignation. The hour was now approaching when she was to bid a long adieu to the sweet light of heaven. She
awaited

awaited the terrors of death with a magnanimity which had accompanied her in every stage of her unhappy existence. To blur the character she had hitherto preserved, was impossible. Her doom being fixed, she was to welcome it with all the majesty of much-injured, persecuted innocence.

Thus resolved and resigned, Noor-Iehan dressed herself in readiness, as the executioners attended at the door of her apartment. She received them courteously, and with a look which beamed forth affability and kindness. "Friends," said she, "the time allotted me, I believe, is nearly past. Do not, however, suppose I have idly squandered away the little that was given me. I have, indeed, had much to do. My poor maids, too, here, (God comfort them in their affliction!) have not been intirely unemployed. We were quite

" unpre-

“unprepared for so sudden a separation,
 “Commend them from me to whomso-
 “ever will protect them. They have
 “been loving to their mistress; and it
 “will be no discredit to them, perhaps,
 “hereafter, if it shall be known that
 “they were the faithful and affectionate
 “companions of Noor-Iehan.” Having
 thus said, she beckoned to the executioners
 to approach and do their office.

Hardened as such wretches are, who,
 for a scanty subsistence, deal in the mur-
 der of their fellow creatures, they, on
 this occasion, could scarcely restrain their
 tears. The uncommon beauty of their
 victim, who stood undismayed before
 them; the exalted sphere in which she
 had recently shone, and in which she had
 gladdened the hearts of all her subjects;
 the wild distraction of her attendants,
 whose screams and lamentations rent the
 vault of heaven: these, altogether, pe-
 trified

trified them with horror; but still their orders were to be executed — and death was the errand on which they were employed.

Trembling, then, as they tied the filken string about her neck, while she remained immovably serene, they at length took hold of the ends, to give, with one accord, the fatal pull, when an alarming noise rumbled towards the chamber. They stopped a moment — One of the maidens sprang to learn the cause — She found it to be a respite. “Hold, hold your impious hands,” almost breathless, she cried. “Hold! Stop your murderous purpose! — My mistress, my gracious mistress is reprieved! She still will live to bless her Fatima.” Alas, fond maiden, the eagerness of thy imagination did it not promise thee too much? The Queen, indeed, was respited; but it was only

only till she should have indulged herself in a last embrace of Iehangire.

Rising from her knees, therefore, for she had in that position piously awaited the stroke that was to plunge her into everlasting night, she walked with composure to the carriage which was prepared to carry her to the apartment of the Emperor. There she arrived; and the Umrah himself introduced her to the royal presence: but now all the fortitude of Iehangire forsook him. He burst into tears, as he took her in his arms. “And will you not spare her to me,” said he to the Umrah. “God so reward you as you shew mercy unto her.”

There is a moment when pity will find its way into the most flinty breast. The Umrah now felt it. He staggered at the scene before him — The husband pleading for his wife — It was too much. —

“Take

“ Take her, take her,” said he to the King. “ Mercy, the sweet child of heaven, conquers every other consideration. I restore her to you. Moreover, the Emperor of the faithful shall never sue in vain.” With this, he retired; and a pardon was proclaimed throughout the army.

Noor-Iehan, restored thus to the world, soon found that her sufferings had increased the number of adherents to the royal cause. The boundless joy of the multitude bespoke the sentiments of their souls. Her name, and her virtues, resounded through the skies. Noor-Iehan was in every body's mouth — Noor-Iehan! re-echoed the aged and the infirm — Noor-Iehan! even lisped the little babes. Disloyalty startled at the contagion as it spread.

This favourable disposition was most grateful to Noor-Iehan: nor was she so

forgetful of her own wrongs, or inattentive to the safety of Iehangire, as to let it dissipate in murmurs and idle conversation. Every thing was ripe for a revolt, and nothing wanting but spirit to encourage the discontents, and zeal to inflame the phrenzy of the populace, to an exemplary revenge of her manifold injuries. Emissaries were now secretly dispatched among the adherents of the Umrah. Pardon was announced to all, on the most extensive terms; and gratuitous rewards were promised to those who would return to their loyalty, and who should be active in crushing the usurpation. In fine, she managed matters with such superiour ability, that in a very short space of time she brought about a total defection in the Umrah's army, and ultimately the destruction of the Umrah himself.

The consequence was, Iehangire, amidst the acclamations of his people, once more
ascended

ascended the throne of his ancestors; but the joy which it occasioned was of short duration. A dangerous illness had long threatened the Emperor: it now broke out, and, in spite of every effort of medicine, tore him from his earthly felicity in the twenty-fourth year of his reign.

With the death of the prince, all influence ceases in the ladies of the haram. This was the case with Noor-Iehan. Shaw-Iehan, who succeeded his father, Iehangire, was the son of a former marriage: he had likewise been in opposition to Noor-Iehan for a considerable time before his father's decease; a coalition was consequently not to be expected. He accordingly signified to Noor-Iehan, by message, a desire that she would retire to her palace at Lahore. To Lahore she accordingly proceeded, as soon as the obsequies of her husband were performed; and there, with a royal income from the

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treasury,

treasury, devoting herself to study, privacy, and ease, she, for eighteen years together, exhibited a most extraordinary instance of the little consequence that dominion is to the happiness of those, who, seemingly, are the most fond to enjoy an exalted state.

To sum up the character of this celebrated woman may be thought needless; after the traits I have already given of it. I shall, therefore, conclude with simply remarking, that her qualifications were of the most brilliant kind; that, in prosperity as well as in adversity, she uniformly conducted herself with firmness and dignity; that from her childhood she had been the sport of the most capricious fortune; that her errors, and her prejudices, particularly those imposed upon her sex, by confinement, and the other restraints of the haram, were singularly few, when contrasted with the bigoted opinions

nions of her sect ; that the dawn, and the morning, of her life were calamitous ; but that the evening was tranquil and unruffled ; and that she peaceably dropped into the grave, the ornament and the admiration of a people, who still speak of her with rapture and delight.

Y 3

FRAG-

FRAGMENT LXX.

FROM Noor-Iehan, whose life was tissued with such singular events, we shall turn towards a country, where beauty, nearly similar to her own, is to be met with, and where the wanton god intrenches himself in smiles of the most alluring nature. A country, indeed, that was not unfrequently made happy with the presence of her whom we have been mentioning; for, as a second divinity, she had a paradise of her own, and Cashmire was the favoured spot.

Cashmire is situated at the extremity of Hindostan, northward of Lahore, and is bounded on the one side by a ridge of the great Caucasus, and on the other by
the

the little Tartarian Thibet and Moulân. The extent of it is not very considerable; but being girt in by a zone of hills, and elevated very considerably above an arid plain, which stretches many miles around it, the scenes which it exhibits are wild and picturesque. Rivers, hills, and valleys, charmingly diversify the landscape. Here a cascade rushes from a foaming precipice; there a tranquil stream glides placidly along; the tinkling rill, too, sounds amidst the groves; and the feathered choristers sing the song of love, close sheltered in the glade.

At what time Cashmire came under the dominion of the Mogul government, and how long, and in what manner, it was independent, before it was annexed to the territories of the House of Timur, are points that are intirely unconnected with the nature of our inquiry. We shall content ourselves, therefore, with remarking,

king, that, though inconsiderable as to its revenues, it was uniformly held in the highest estimation by the Emperors of Hindostan. Thither they repaired, in the plenitude of their greatness, when the affairs of state would admit of their absence; and there they divested themselves of form and all the oppressive ceremony of state,

The royal manner of travelling to Cashmire was grand, though tedious and unwieldy, and shewed, in an eminent degree, the splendour and magnificence of an Eastern potentate. Aurungzebe, we are told, seldom began his march to that country, for a march certainly it was to be called, without an escort of eighty or an hundred thousand fighting men, besides the gentlemen of his household, the attendants of his seraglio, and most of his officers of state. These all continued with him during the time he was on the road,

road, which generally was a month; but no sooner was he arrived at the entrance of those ærial regions, than, with a select party of friends, he separated from the rest of his retinue, and with them ascended the defiles which led him to his Eden.

The temperature of the air of Cashmire, elevated as it is so much above the adjoining country, together with the streams which continually pour from its mountains, enables the husbandman to cultivate with success the soil he appropriates to agriculture; whilst the gardener's labour is amply repaid in the abundant produce of his fruit. In short, nature wears her gayest cloathing in this enchanting spot. The rivers supply the inhabitants with almost every species of fish; the hills yield sweet herbage for the cattle; the plains are covered with grain of different denominations; and the woods
are

are stored with variety of game. In this country, therefore, we are not to be surprised that the ladies are so singularly beautiful. The picture intended by heaven would have been incomplete without them.

“ Adown their necks, more white than virgin snow,
 “ Of softest hue, the golden tresses flow ;
 “ Their heaving breasts, of purer, softer white
 “ Than snow-hills glist’ning in the moon’s pale light,
 “ Except where cover’d by the sash, were bare,
 “ And love, unseen, smil’d soft, and panted there.”

LUSIAD.

In almost every other part of Asia the Scythian feature is to be traced in a greater or a less degree. It is not so here. The Cashmireans seem a race distinct from all others in the East : their persons are more elegant, and their complexions more delicate, and more tinged with red. Were this insulated world, indeed, a little nearer Europe, its fair inhabitants might be looked upon as a collateral branch of your own unrivalled

unrivalled countrywomen, whose perfection they almost equal.

Where beauty is, there ever will be love; and love will always be attended by poetry and music. Thus we find the Cashmireans cultivate those arts with extraordinary success: poetry in particular. No country of the East has produced more elegant effusions of imagination than Cashmire; nor has any been more celebrated in story. Even Solomon's Rose of Sharon, and Lily of the Valley, will be found to droop, when compared with the flights of some of their bards, who whilome strung the lyre to love, and attuned it with delicacy and feeling.

Strange as it may seem, the people of this country believe, that even Solomon himself was inspired in the bowers of Cashmire. In many parts they point out places, which they represent as dedicated
to

to him; and even some, that, at his desire, were called expressly by his name. That Solomon might have had some of the fair ones of his seraglio from this nursery of beauty, is not at all improbable. He sought every where for gratification; and therefore, if, for the gold of Ophir, he could send vessels into the Indian seas, the advancing a few steps farther, for a much more estimable treasure, does not appear incompatible with that monarch's disposition. Though a man of wisdom, he supposed there might be happiness in the indulgence of passions, granted him by heaven. His eagerness in the pursuit was great; nor did he spare either money or attention.

"Fly swift, my friends; my servants, fly; employ

"Your instant pains, to bring your master joy.

"Let all my wives and concubines be dress'd.

"——— Fresh roses bring

"To strew my bed, till the impoverish'd spring

"Confess her want; around my amorous head

"Be dropping myrrh, and liquid amber shed,

"Till Arab has no more."

PRIOR.

Towards

Towards the gratification of this disposition, therefore, Cashmire might have contributed her portion; and thence those legends, which have been circulated relative to Solomon having been resident there.

On the decadence of the Mogul power in Hindostan, Cashmire felt some of the ravages of war. It is now, however, in peace; and the inhabitants are desirous of keeping it so. Industry, sprightliness, and good fellowship, fill up the measure of their time. They gratefully return thanks to heaven for the blessings they enjoy. Their days are the days of comfort; and their nights are crowned with tranquillity and repose.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXXI.

THE Mohammedans, (to return from our excursion) like all superstitious people, are addicted to the most opposite propensities. They are given to the most voluptuous enjoyments, at the same time that they mortify the flesh as much as any sect whatever. They are positive believers in the Koran ; yet they have faith in prediction, especially astrology of the judicial kind. The higher orders, indeed, endeavour to conceal this weakness* ; but the inferiour ranks are above denying what

* Yet all the Mohammedan princes (those at least of Hindostan) have their public astrologers or soothsayers, who form part of their household establishment, and whom they always consult touching the days or hours most propitious to certain purposes, as marching, giving battle, receiving or paying visits, &c.

is to them a source of infinite gratification. Hence nothing is so common in Mussulman countries as a wizard and a fortune-teller.

“ ——— A hungry, lean-fac’d villain,
 “ A mere anatomy, a mountebank,
 “ A thread-bare juggler, and a fortune-teller,
 “ A needy, hollow-ey’d, sharp-looking wretch,
 “ A living-dead man.”

SHAKESPEARE.

They have no magicians, however, among them, with power such as was common in the days of Lactantius, “ to call up
 “ souls from the dead, render them visi-
 “ ble to human eyes, and make them
 “ speak and foretel future events;” but they have what is almost as ridiculous, and what in reality may be termed the same, men who have an implicit confidence in most of the occult sciences.

Alchymy, which made such extraordinary progress in Europe some years ago, was originally derived from the Saracens.

They

They first applied to the study of it, as may be gathered from the word itself, which is derived from the Arabic. This *ignis fatuus*, this preposterous chimera of the brain, this attempt at making gold, and of discovering an universal medicine or panacea, is still in estimation with the philosophic descendants of Islâum. To what presumptuous lengths will not the arrogance of man transport him ! Human pride would grasp at a knowledge of the most hidden secrets of nature. We would create as well as destroy. It is even averred, that it was once under deliberation how to make man by other mediums than those nature has hitherto provided ; but “ *entre nous,*” says *Le Diable Asmodée*, “ *la pierre philosophale n’est qu’une belle chimère, que j’ai moi-même forgée pour me jouer de l’esprit humain qui veut passer les bornes qui lui ont été prescrites.*” And so might he have said of all the other pretensions of Alchymy, its ferments and dissolvents,

diffolvents, &c. They have been the foibles of ingenious men, the fraudulent impositions of the designing. Priests, and those of the religious orders of Mohammedans, are in general the professors of this science. Hence, and to their mortifications, is owing the great veneration in which they have been held.

Solitude and a dereliction to the society of the world, first engendered these extravagancies. Dervishes, calendars, (a lower order of the recluse of Mussulmen) and facquires, originally produced them from their retirements: they came afterwards into the aid of premeditated craft; and they still retain their influence and power: they likewise introduced the belief of the Morakibah, or second sight. Saâdi, the elegant author of the Gûlistun, speaking of human calamities, says, “Two sorts
“ of people are peculiarly to be commiserated: — Merchants, who, from the
VOL. II. Z “ vicissitude

“ vicissitude of seasons, have met with
 “ shipwrecked fortunes; and heirs, who
 “ have, lucklessly, fallen into the hands
 “ of philosophic calendars.”

Saâdi, however, was no friend to the
 priesthood; neither was another Persian
 writer of eminence, who, in reflecting on
 the indolence, folly, and austerities of
 facquires and dervishes, recounts an anecdote
 of a brother, who had lost an eye,
 was a little *distract* in the brain, and had
 his constant residence in a cave, where he
 was pinched with both hunger and cold.
 This poor enthusiast, perishing almost
 with want, thus addressed himself to
 Heaven: — “ O, Creator of Mankind!
 “ I am not aggrieved that I have lost an
 “ eye; neither do I complain of my want
 “ of food: but, in humble submission, I
 “ must acknowledge my sufferings are
 “ scarce supportable from the damps and
 “ the cold of my habitation. Relieve me,
 “ then,

“ then, O Allah ! — I know full well
 “ it does not become a sinner like me to
 “ remonstrate ; but misery will break its
 “ bounds. I have read, and I have heard
 “ of your merciful liberality ; but where
 “ is that all-benevolent goodness, if a
 “ wretch like me is to be deserted in the
 “ hour of need ?” — An inhabitant of a
 neighbouring village, passing at the in-
 stant, heard, with astonishment, this
 prayer of the dervishe. He knew not
 whether to laugh at, or to pity him. A
 desire, however, to drive him from the
 cave, superceded all feelings of compas-
 sion. Putting his mouth, therefore, to a
 crevice in the rock, “ If thou art too
 “ cold in thy retirement, dissatisfied mor-
 “ tal,” thundered he, “ go, get thee into
 “ the sun — that will warm thee.” Star-
 tled by the noise, the shivering visionary
 returned, “ How, Lord ! have you no
 “ other habit to spare me than the rays
 “ of the sun ? — Forsooth, your gene-
 Z 2 “ rosity

“rosity is boundless.” — “Ungrateful
 “wretch,” replied the other; “but I’ll
 “not immediately punish thee. Be, as
 “a present expiation of thy fault, eight
 “days longer naked, and then thou shalt
 “hear from me again.” The dervish, as
 he was ordered, continued without a
 murmur in the cave, when, on the day
 appointed, an old man appeared, and pre-
 sented him with a dress; but so faded, so
 torn, and so patched, that the dervish, fly-
 ing into a passion, “O Father!” cried
 he, “thou who governeest all things, is
 “this the mighty present thou didst pro-
 “mise me? Well mightest thou be eight
 “days in preparing it; for eight days it
 “would take at least to gather all the
 “scaps of which it is composed. I’ll
 “have none of it. I’ll leave this spot,
 “and, applying myself to labour like
 “other people, endeavour to procure the
 “means of providing for my wants,
 “without

“ without yours, or any other superna-
 “ tural assistance.”

Many are the lashes and the strokes of
 satire which are thus levelled, by Moham-
 medan writers, at these pests of society;
 but all in vain. Thousands and ten thou-
 sands of them are to be found scattered
 over Turkey, India, and Persia: they are
 the favourites of monarchs: they are al-
 most the idols of the commonalty.

FRAGMENT LXXII.

WE have already declared that the laws of Mussulmen are too generally at the beck of their sovereigns; and we have reason for declaring so. The Cadhi, indeed, decides all points of right, of law, and of religion; with an appeal to the Mufti, or chief judge, or to the sovereign; but this decision is nothing better, when the sovereign chuses to interfere, than the pompous promulgation of his will, through a grave and a reverend magistrate. Unrestrained power is lodged where it most pointedly should be circumscribed. The interpretation and expounding of written laws, even where codes are precisely defined, require universally the study of a separate profession. What then

then must be the security of a man's rights, when the discretionary fiat of a Cadhi is to decide upon them? One, who, as a Mohammedan commentator says, "can finish causes of the most intricate nature with as much facility and ease as David touched the strings of his harp when he sang to the children of Israel."

Nothing in fact can be more oppressive and arbitrary than the Mohammedan system of jurisprudence: they acknowledge it themselves, and burlesque it with not a little acrimony. "A Mussulman had a dog," says one of their favourite authors, "of which he was exceedingly fond. The dog died, and the master grieved for his faithful and attached companion." A report of this trifling circumstance soon reached the Cadhi's ears. The judge raged at the recital: dogs being in abomination with rigid Mohammedans.

medans. The culprit was sent for. Tremblingly he approached the Cadhi. "How, wretch!" said the upright magistrate, "art thou of the race of infidels who adore their dogs? Away with him to prison; and in a dungeon let him become sensible of the heinousness of his crime." — "O merciful and gracious Cadhi!" cried the prisoner, "hear me, hear me, but for a moment. My story is long; but this is in brief. My dog was not a common dog: he was a dog of extraordinary parts and good sense. We long had lived together: he at length fell sick; and as he was expiring, 'Come hither,' says he, 'my friend. Much merit is to be rewarded in this world. When I die, be you sure to fulfil my last requests. Take certain portions of money, (mentioning the several sums) and dispose of them according to such and such directions; then gather into
 " a purse

“ a purse two hundred pieces of silver, and
 “ lay them at the feet of the sage and ve-
 “ nerable Cadhi, for charitable purposes :
 “ he will turn them to that account from
 “ whence thou shalt receive reward. I
 “ can say no more. Be but punctual,
 “ and favour will be showered upon
 “ thee.’ With these words, he expired.
 “ To fulfil, then, O Cadhi ! the dying
 “ injunctions of my faithful monitor, I
 “ was earnestly engaged in procuring the
 “ means of acquitting myself with fide-
 “ lity. It is true, I moaned over my
 “ loss ; but it was the lamentation of
 “ one friend for another. Believe not,
 “ therefore, what my enemies alledge
 “ against me — I am innocent — I am
 “ poor ; but I am conscientious — Wit-
 “ ness this purse, the remains of my
 “ humble fortune, and which, as I was
 “ directed, I now lay before you.” —
 “ Honest soul !” replied the Cadhi. —
 “ You see,” said he, turning to the
 people —

people — “ You see to what shafts of
 “ malevolence the good are exposed in
 “ this world. Go, my good friend,”
 continued he to the prisoner — “ You
 “ have trespassed nought against the law.
 “ Go to your wife and family. Had I
 “ known this before, you should not have
 “ been brought to this tribunal. It is
 “ cruel that the upright man should be
 “ accused ; but our duty tells us we must
 “ listen. If the Cadhi shuts his ears,
 “ who will watch over that pure and
 “ holy stream, which flows from the
 “ fountain of all goodness, the Koran
 “ of our blessed prophet ?”

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXXIII.

THE seraglio enervates the Moham-
medan. He is in general the slave of
indolence. Ministers manage the affairs
of government for the prince, while he
supinely passes his days in the company
of his ladies. Notwithstanding this en-
feebling inactivity, the men of Mussul-
man belief are brave and hardy soldiers:
they delight in war, and in the conduct
of it exhibit both valour and magnani-
mity. Much state and dignity is to be
observed continually surrounding Moham-
medan sovereigns and great men. In
gravity of deportment, and decency of
behaviour, they are trained from their
very infancy; but this too frequently de-
scends into flattery and the excess of adu-
lation.

lation. "If the king at noon day was
 "to say it was night," says an old moralizing Arab, "his courtiers would in-
 "continently discern both the moon and
 "the other planets."

The universal inclination to tranquillity and the pleasures of the haram, render the life of an exalted character among the Mohammedans, retired. Excepting at the head of his armies, when necessity calls him forth, he is rarely to be seen but in his Durbar, or at stated festivals, which law and custom have established. He is, in short, as far as his prejudices will admit, a voluptuous Epicurean. "Jovial
 "days, blooming springs, old wine and
 "young maidens, enjoy freely, O man!
 "for life is not to be twice enjoyed," was an inscription found on a goblet of Baber's, who reigned over Hindostan in the year of Christ 1530, and was one
 of

of the ablest and best princes of the House of Timur.

“ But ah ! sweet maid, my counsel hear.
 “ (Youth should attend when those advise,
 “ Whom long experience renders sage :)
 “ While music charms the ravish’d ear ;
 “ While sparkling cups delight our eyes,
 “ Be gay, and scorn the frowns of age.”

HAFIZ.

So sang sweet Hafiz, the Anacreon of Persic poetry.

Formal and reserved as the Mussulman deportment undoubtedly is, even that vanishes when they have the duties of hospitality to discharge, or when the society of the better sort is free to the admission of a stranger. They are a haughty, yet generous people : they swell with the splendour of their consequence ; but they are affable and humane. “ Hast thou seen him who believes not in the law,” says the Koran ; “ it is he who defrauds the orphan, and who eats the
 “ bread

PHILOSOPHICAL RHAPSODIES.

“ bread of the poor. Woe be to them
“ who are hypocrites in their faith, or
“ at their prayers. Woe be to them
“ also, who promote not good actions;
“ but who endeavour to prevent them.”

But can any thing be more beautiful, or
more expressive, than the following lines
on Charity, the elegant paraphrase of Sir
W. Jones ?

“ She asks what cares the joyless train oppress,
“ What sickness wastes them, or what wants distress ?
“ And as they mourn, she steals a tender sigh,
“ While all her soul sits melting in her eye :
“ Then with a smile the healing balm bestows,
“ And sheds a tear of pity o’er their woes ;
“ Which, as it drops, some soft-ey’d angel bears,
“ Transform’d to pearl, and in his bosom wears.”

SOLIMA.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXXIV.

IN opposition, indeed, to the favourable traces which I would wish to draw of the Mohammedan character, writers of ability have thrown in a shade, which distorts the piece, and presents us with a portrait intirely bereft of every thing amiable and pleasing. The first class of these formidable opponents have been Jesuits and Roman missionaries : some of them men of exemplary piety and good sense ; but by far the greater part the votaries of bigotry. Zeal in the propagation of their faith made them intemperate and overbearing : they were humble and proud, yielding and tenacious, as that intractable principle actuated them at the moment.

In

In reply to these, I shall content myself with observing, that no countries in the world have exhibited stronger instances of toleration than those of Mohammedan persuasion *. No religion whatever hath been interdicted its ceremonies, excepting for reasons of a political nature. The Roman Catholic even, after its bloody crusades and persecutions, was permitted its masses, its processions, and its variety of alluring and intoxicating pageants. No molestation was given to either the pastors or the people of their flocks: they resided in peace and in security.

Why this should have been deviated from, is to be gathered from the inconsiderate behaviour of many of the fathers

* To be satisfied of the truth of this assertion, the reader will be pleased to turn to the preface of Ayer Akberry, (recently published) where he will meet with such sentiments of toleration as would reflect credit on the most liberal and most charitable period of Christianity.

themselves.

themselves. The following purport of an edict of the Grand Seignor, in the year of Christ 1707, is so intirely to the purpose, that I shall give it to you without either comment or remark. After enumerating the invariable inclination of the Ottoman Musnud to tolerate all religions which should not be found subversive of good order and government, it proceeds to state, “ that certain Frank Priests, especially the “ Jesuits, among several others, who had “ their habitations and churches in all parts “ of the chosen of Alla’s dominions, had “ been favoured with positive permission to “ exercise their sacerdotal functions for “ the ambassadors, consuls, Frank merchants, and others of the Christian “ religion; but that the return which “ the Porte received, were disturbances “ and divisions among its subjects: That “ these Jesuits, not content to enjoy the “ liberty that was allowed, went about “ the European and Asian provinces of

VOL. II. A a Turkey,

“ Turkey, with pernicious designs, full
“ of sedition, and with promises of money,
“ honours, and different masters to
“ those of the Ottoman subjects, who
“ would embrace the Christian religion.
“ For which reasons, and for many others,
“ the Grand Seignor absolutely prohibits
“ the conversion of any Mohammedan, under
“ the severest penalty to the offender,
“ and to the total expulsion of the Jesuits
“ themselves.”

Thus was it in the empire of the Turks, that the intriguing disposition of the Jesuits and missionaries was not alone confined to Mohammedan countries, situated in and bordering upon Europe; it found its way into the remotest countries of the East, and there disseminated its principles under the unsuspecting governments of Mohammedan Princes. Thence also, as from Turkey, its teachers have been frequently driven with disgrace. What Jesuits and priests therefore

therefore have written, is to be received with (I am sorry to say it) caution and distrust. I arraign not their morals; neither do I decry their intentions: but I cannot set aside the consideration of the *principle*, which, in the first instance, must have actuated their missions. Nor can I readily believe that enthusiasm, bigotry, and ambition are capable of seeing through a just and unprejudiced medium.

The next class of adversaries I have to deal with, is of a less suspicious, though perhaps of a more questionable nature: I mean Authors, who have been engaged in interested pursuits among Mohammedans; and who, individually, of no consideration in their own countries, (for I allude here indiscriminately to all European nations who have had settlements in the East) have felt themselves amazed at the obstinacy of the children of Islâum, who have dared to withstand, or even to find fault with,

extravagancies of their pseudo-monarchical ideas. “ It matters not,” says one of these writers, “ whether the Mohammedan “ in Hindostan be Patan, Persian, or Tartar ; the enervating softness of the climate soon forms but one common “ character of them ; the distinguishing “ qualities of which are perfidy and sensuality. These qualities would long “ since have destroyed the whole race of “ them, had they not been continually “ supplied with new recruits from their “ original country. I am sensible I have “ altogether given the Moors a detestable “ character ; and I am sorry to say it is “ so universally true, that I never knew “ above two or three exceptions, and these “ were among the Tartars and Persian “ officers of the army, whose native manners were not yet utterly corrupted. “ Their friendship little, their devotion “ is all ostentation ; they will drink a “ dram in the intervals between each “ prayer,

“prayer, and they will stab while they
 “embrace you.” SCRAFTON.

Such is the picture drawn by a man, who resided some years in Hindoostan. But in the name of common charity, a boon which every one may claim, how could such undistinguishing obloquy be received, or how could such galling and indiscriminate rancour fall from the pen of a person of abilities, education, and good sense? It is wonderful! In Hindoostan indeed, as in every other division of the world, æras of treachery, bloodshed, and false devotion, have presented themselves: but have the heavenly lights of truth, honour, and humanity, never once visited these abandoned regions? The period of which this author professes to treat, was a period unquestionably stained with crimes of various and sanguinary dyes. The empire of the Moguls, from the invasion of Thamas Kouli Cawn, or Nadir Shaw, in 1739, had fallen

to the most degenerate ebb of political depravity. Soubahdars and Nabobs were daily seen to erect the lawless standard of ambition. Massacres had become common; and all, in short, was anarchy and confusion.

But in this scene of horror, in this scene of misery, where the humble peasant, the industrious labourer and mechanic, more peculiarly suffered—in this scene of general desolation, did the Mohammedan bear a singularly noxious character: or did not others (I mean Christians) tread close in the prosecution of views not very much dissimilar to his own? The tribunal of humanity, I fear, were retrospection to be employed, would adjudge us but a trifling advantage over the disciples of the Koran. Bad they have been; and in some instances, superlatively so, I will acknowledge; but their situation should be considered, and they should be judged of with lenity;

at

at least, it should be the care of that people, who stand forth their accusers, that like aspersions fall not upon their own character. When we blame others, we should be conscious of innocence ourselves.

It is not, however, the Mohammedan alone, on whom this torrent of calumny is poured. "The Gentoos," says the same writer, "unhappily for themselves, are made the ministers of oppression over each other; the Moormen, haughty, lazy, and voluptuous, make them, of whom they have no jealousy, the ministers of their oppression, which farther answers the end of dividing them, and prevents their uniting to fling off the yoke; and by the strange intoxication of power, they are found still more cruel and rapacious than their foreign masters; and what is more extraordinary, the Bramins still exceed the rest

“ in every abuse of power; and seem to
 “ think, if they bribe God, by bestowing
 “ a part of their plunder on cows and
 “ facquires, their iniquities will be par-
 “ doned.” Thus the Hindoos come in
 for their share of the condemnation. Se-
 veral millions of industrious, inoffensive
 people are in this manner branded and
 loaded with opprobrium.

The traits which we have already given
 of the Hindoo and Mohammedan character,
 will be sufficient, I hope, to wipe off as-
 persions so entirely unmerited. Can it,
 however, be any longer matter of surprize
 to us, that generation upon generation shall
 accumulate prejudices and erroneous ideas,
 when an individual, in wantonness, or
 through chagrin, shall endeavour to blast
 a people, whom it is evident he never
 studied? Why strive to foster those re-
 ligious and national dislikes, which it is
 the

the duty of every member of society to banish, if possible, from the world ?

Happily, indeed, the shafts of detraction thus incautiously hurled, oftener miss their aim than succeed, in regard to the object at which they are levelled. “ I would always have you, however,” continues this inconsistent author, “ carry in your mind, “ that their grievances have only arisen “ since the invasion of Nadir Shaw ; for till “ within these *very few* years, merchants “ were no where better protected, nor more “ at their own ease, than under the Moham- “ medan government ; nor is there a part “ of the world where arts and agriculture “ have been more cultivated of which the “ vast plenty and variety of manufactories “ and rich merchants were proof suffi- “ cient.” Here then, we see, a very few years comprehended the period in which this thorough alteration took place. This complete change, from the possession of not an inconsiderable portion of virtues, to
I the

the adoption of the most vicious propensities in nature. How can we reconcile this to sense, or to common understanding? Reader, I will not trouble you with a refutation of what is so manifestly contradictory in itself. Draw your own conclusions. Be it however in your recollection, that a very trifling space of time elapsed between the invasion of Nadir Shaw, and the period when this writer must have gathered his materials : And whether treachery and injustice were of Mohammedan growth ; or whether they were caught in intercourse with the natives of Hindostan, the unhappy fate of a variety of great families, stripped of their honour and their fortunes, must, to the eye of reason, have exhibited the enterprising, but oppressive, children of Christianity, in a more dreadful point of view, than even the most virulent of the Hindoo and Mohammedan detractors can possibly represent those devoted Asiatics. Mohammedans were not

in

in the course of despoiling nations of their rights, when those writers took up the pen against them ; conquest had previously given them possession ; and it was due to their honour, and their safety, to maintain it. Europeans had not this to boast of; they indeed advanced pretensions; — the justice of them it is not our business to inquire into.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXXV.

BEFORE we leave the continent and seas of Hindostan, let us turn our eyes for a moment, and gratefully contemplate the little island of Zooawnee or Johanna, which, though not immediately within the compass of our inquiry, is yet of so much importance, that the candid reader will, I hope, pardon a farther trespass on that patience which, I fear, is already too much exhausted by Asiatic investigation. Zooawnee is situated in the southern entrance of the Mozambique channel, and may contain about twenty thousand inhabitants. From its general appearance, the nature of the soil, and its vicinity to the island of Comoro, on an hill of which a large volcano constantly rages, it is not improbable

improbable to suppose that Zooawnee has been thrown up by means of subterraneous fires. It bears the strongest outward marks of having been formed by an eruption; and its situation, as I have already said, favours the conjecture, eruptions having been more commonly observed submarine, as may be instanced in islands of the Mediterranean, St. Helena, and others, or on those parts of continents, which are not very distant from the sea.

Zooawnee is of a semicircular form; the easternmost shores, which are the most beautiful, and those which are always resorted to by navigators, are ever green, and ever healthy. Two ranges of lofty hills divide it nearly from north to south; the first barren, parched, and rocky; the next, in the direction of an amphitheatre, rears itself to the clouds, and is girt to the very summit with the most luxuriant foliage. From the tops and the sides of
these

these hills, streams of the purest water form themselves into refreshing cascades, which rushing into the vales, then lose themselves in beautiful rivulets. On the banks of these streams, cattle in great abundance are to be seen, and fruits in the highest perfection and plenty. The aborigines of Zooawnee were probably from Mozambique, on the continent of Africa. They are of the same countenance and complection. They are, like them, woolly headed; and their language is apparently the same. They are an obliging, a merry-hearted, and an hospitable race of beings. The sovereign, and the principal islanders, however, are of a different country. They are all of a light olive colour, long-haired, and speak a sort of corrupted Arabic. The religion of the chief men of Zooawnee, and indeed of most of the natives, is Mohammedan. They have regular mosques; their priests are held in great

great veneration, and the Koran is read in the original Arabic.

The Sultan of Zooawnee is descended from an Arab of some consideration in Arabia, who was forced to fly his country somewhat more than a century ago. As he and his adherents were sailing in quest of a place of refuge, they accidentally fell in with Zooawnee. The place charmed them. They found it possessed of every thing they wanted; and the natives, children of such unsuspecting kindness and good humour, that almost all they were masters of was at the service of their more enlightened visitors. Here then the Arabs rested from their labours; and here they established an immediate and an unextorted supremacy.

A grateful remembrance of the kind reception of their forefathers, hath uniformly inclined the rulers of Zooawnee
to

to manifest the like humanity to all who are unfortunate and distressed : an instance of which I will now mention to you. In the year 1774, a ship belonging to the English East-India Company was, by some fatal mistake, wrecked upon a reef of rocks, which runs from the western side of Zooawnee. As Providence would kindly have it, none of the crew were drowned. The King, hearing of the accident, immediately set out from his place of residence, which was at some distance, and got as near as possible to where the ship lay. There he fixed his abode, and that of his principal officers ; issuing an order for the islanders to assemble, and to assist in saving the property of the strangers. He next provided houses for the English captain and his people. He directed them to be supplied with every thing they should stand in need of. He even superintended the charitable work himself, and saw that his orders were attended to. In this manner

manner the Sultan of Zooawnee continued to labour, visiting daily, in person, the beach nearest to the wreck ; nor did he cease, until every article which could possibly be saved was got on shore. He then took the cargo and each individual's effects into his own care ; and with the most scrupulous regard to good faith, preserved even the most trifling matters for the sufferers until they were severally called for, when he punctually delivered them to the claimants. This humanity, protection and hospitality, which would do honour to the politest nation on earth, has indeed been gratefully acknowledged by the English East-India Company, in a handsome present to the Sultan, and to several of his officers.

How happy for mankind, were kingdoms, who boast a superiority over the Zooawneese, to follow them, were it only in this one benevolent, this unostentatious in-

stance of generosity. No unmerciful laws are here to be referred to, awarding what has been saved from the fury of the waves, to the coffers of the lords of the soil. No widows, no orphans, bereft of the aid of those who have been used to procure them bread, are here to be observed sinking in poverty and wretchedness, while those are ordained to divide the spoil, on whose shores the husbands and the fathers have miserably perished. Detestable remains of more than savage inhumanity ! Blush, Europe, blush ! Where, except within thy own limits, are such cruel customs to be traced ? Scarce a year passes in the vast dominion of the Chinese, but vessels of some sort or other are wrecked upon their coasts ; and do the Chinese seize upon what chance preserves from the rage of the merciless deep ? No, they look upon the families of the unhappy sufferers as indisputably intitled to whatever can be saved. The government itself stands in the place

place of guardian and protector. Nay, if by good luck any of the crew are saved from the ship, this people, who are in other respects so jealous of strangers, at once admit the poor sufferers as children into the national family. They clothe, they feed them; and at the public cost send them to their respective homes. "God forbid," say they, "we should gain by other men's misfortunes."

When I reflect on this subject, (at best so melancholy in its nature) Columbus's letter to Ferdinand and Isabella from Hispaniola, always occurs to me. "The King," says he, "having been informed of our misfortune of being shipwrecked, expressed great grief for our loss, and immediately sent aboard all the people in the place in many large canoes. We soon unloaded the ship of every thing that was upon deck, as the King gave us great assistance. He himself with his bro-

“thers and relations took all possible care
 “that every thing should be properly done
 “both aboard and ashore; and from time
 “to time he sent some of his relations
 “weeping, to beg of me not to be dejected,
 “for he would give me all that he had.
 “I can assure your Highness, that there
 “would not have been such care taken
 “in securing our effects in any part of
 “Spain, as all our property was put in
 “one place near his palace, until the
 “houses which he wanted to prepare for
 “the custody of it were emptied. He
 “immediately placed a guard of armed
 “men, who watched during the whole
 “night, and those on shore lamented, as
 “if they had much interested themselves
 “in our loss.” And yet, can it be re-
 membered without abhorrence? this very
 people of Hispaniola, notwithstanding all
 their kindness and humanity,—this very
 people were afterwards most barbarously
 extirpated by the Spaniards. Spanish dogs
 were

were even trained to hunt, and tear them limb from limb for the amusement of their masters ! Humiliating thought, that almost every corner of the globe can furnish instances of conduct, the very recital of which comparatively degrades the European character !

But to return to Zooawnee ; the people are happy, good humoured, lively, and obliging ; they breathe the air of liberty, and are both compassionate and humane. Long may ye continue so, ye harmless children of nature ! Long may ye enjoy your freedom ; long may ye continue the undisturbed possessors of those homes where ye now dwell ! Alas, how great the contrast between you and that of those miserable sons of men, who labour in a colony of Europeans not very distant from you ! “ In the island of Mauritius,” says an intelligent French writer, who visited those parts in 1773, “ the poor unfortunate

“ Coffres are whipped for the most trifling
 “ offences. My pen is weary of reciting
 “ the horrors, my eyes of seeing, and my
 “ ears of hearing their doleful mournings.
 “ Some of the inhabitants form parties of
 “ pleasure for hunting those who secrete
 “ themselves in the woods. They put
 “ up a negroe as they would a wild beast;
 “ and if they cannot hunt him down,
 “ will shoot him, cut off his head, and
 “ bring it in triumph to town upon the
 “ end of a stick. Of this I am an eye-
 “ witness every week. Age even has no
 “ mercy shewn it. When they are too
 “ old for labour, they are turned out to
 “ get their bread where they can. One
 “ day I saw a poor creature, who was
 “ nothing but skin and bone, cutting off
 “ the flesh of a dead horse to eat. It
 “ was one skeleton devouring another.”
 “ O ye women of sensibility and senti-
 “ ment,” a little after exclaims this ad-
 vocate

vocate of humanity, " ye who weep at
 " the afflicting story of a novel, or the
 " representation of a tragedy, know that
 " what constitutes your chiefeft delight,
 " is moistened with the tears, and dyed
 " with the blood of man !"

B b 4

FRAG-

FRAGMENT LXXVI.

WE have hitherto wandered through countries which have too generally been supposed barren, and which, in consequence, have been, I may safely say, but superficially observed by the moralist and historian. We now, however, come to fields where plenteous crops of science have arisen; where poets and philosophers, together with the first votaries of science, have endeavoured to reap the fair fruits of knowledge. It is a sanctuary to be trodden with reverence! The way is indeed perplexed: difficulties are to be encountered on every side; but still we are not to be daunted. In search of information, let genius and prolific imagination have taken
what

what strides they may have pleased — let common sense have been discarded, and learned supposition have been substituted in its room, still a glimmering of truth may be discerned. Long-sanctified romance may be submitted to candid investigation. Hazardous as the attempt may be, airy castles are to be stormed, however upheld by the breath of time. Truth is simple in herself: — all nations, all ages have alike confessed her so.

We have, on more occasions than one, found ourselves under the necessity of speaking with freedom of the land of Egypt. We now come to it as the subject of speculation for the moment; and, as nothing dictates our researches but a spirit of candour, I flatter myself with the hope of meeting with indulgence at least, from the liberal-minded reader. The situation of Egypt is so precisely well known

known in these days, that it may appear unnecessary to describe it. A few words, however, on that head may not be unnecessary to our design; and I therefore must be pardoned for taking the road that hath so often been trod before. Egypt is situated on the north-east part of Africa; its boundaries are the Mediterranean to the north; the Isthmus of Suez and the Red Sea to the east; Nubia to the south; and the deserts of Africa to the west. Its extent, from north to south, is about five hundred and fifty miles, and its breadth about one hundred and twenty-five miles. The name of Egypt, according to the poetical historians of former ages, was derived from Egyptus, the brother of a sovereign of that country, who was called Danaus. The Arabs and the Hebrews knew it by the name of Misraïm, and others denominated it Coptus, from the city of that appellation in Upper Egypt.

The

The foil of Egypt, excepting when enriched by the inundations of the Nile, is barren. The vegetables and trees natural to it are few, and of an inferiour order. It is capable indeed of yielding corn; but not even that without incessant care and cultivation.

Notwithstanding this very unproductive property in the foil of Egypt, and notwithstanding the overpowering heats of the climate, which, together with the exhalations of the Nile, and the manifold reservoirs of its waters, must have rendered it unfavourable to the constitution of man; and notwithstanding its very inconsiderable limits, yet still it has been looked upon as the parent stock of almost universal population. To colonies from Egypt, most of the countries we have already looked at are supposed to have owed their inhabitants. Some antiquaries even venture to give to the South Americans

cans an Egyptian origin. The fact seems to be, however, as demonstratively as so remote a matter can be traced, that Misraïm, the grandson of Ham, led a body of people into Egypt about two thousand one hundred and eighty-eight years before Christ, and there founded an empire, whose duration was one thousand six hundred and sixty-three years. How long antecedent to this æra the Chinese, Japanese, and Hindoos, had appeared in a civilised state of society, has been the subject of inquiry in preceding fragments. They manifestly were kingdoms of importance, at a time when the land, afterwards denominated Egypt, was no better than a desert.

It is pleasant to follow the ingenious conjectures of speculative men. If they even fail of instruction, they amuse with the novelty of their ideas. Monsieur Bailly, a learned man, and a lively writer,
desirous

desirous of getting a little way beyond
 all that had ever gone before him,
 boldly comes forward, and says, "Egypt
 " you insist upon to have been the nur-
 " fery of mankind, as well as the nur-
 " fery of all arts and sciences. Well,
 " be it so. Let your position have all
 " due attention paid to it. While you,
 " however, waste your time on these
 " followers of Misraim, I will try if I
 " cannot discover a root to the branches
 " of this extraordinary family. Now,
 " to my mind, the Atlantides, so honou-
 " rably mentioned by Plato, the Atlan-
 " tides must, in some degree, have given
 " children to Egypt. They were well
 " situated for sending out colonies; and
 " why should they not have pitched upon
 " the land of Egypt as well as upon any
 " other land? But then you will say,
 " who were these Atlantides? From
 " whence did these mighty people draw
 " their being? I will tell you:—The
 " Atlan-

“ Atlantides came down from their moun-
 “ tains in the north with the Scythians,
 “ or under the denomination of that peo-
 “ ple, passing the Caucasus, and falling
 “ on the kingdom of Pontus, thence
 “ proceeded onwards. From the moun-
 “ tains north of Caucasus, that great
 “ line of circumvallation which separates
 “ the north from the south of Africa, I
 “ can even discover the origin not only
 “ of the Persians, who brought with
 “ them from those frozen climes the
 “ worship of fire, but also the Indians
 “ and Chinese. Nay, I will still adven-
 “ ture a step farther, and will assert, that
 “ the labours of Hercules were perform-
 “ ed in the north, and that the garden of
 “ the Hesperides was near the Pole. I
 “ will not agree with Rudbeck, that
 “ Sweden was the Atlantis of Plato.
 “ No; — that famous island was in the
 “ frozen ocean; and, as I said before,
 “ the

“ the Hesperian orchard was in the vicinity of the Pole.”

With modern romance, such as this, to divert more than to bewilder us, together with the fiction of the ancients, it is not an easy matter to get into a probable road of conjecture with respect to the celebrated Egyptians. Monsieur Bailly maintains, they were descended from the Atlantides: others deduce the colony from the followers of Misraim. The Egyptians themselves boasted of an empire of demi-gods, previous to their government by kings, which continued for forty-two thousand nine hundred and eighty-four years: a pretension, by the way, which the Babylonians, Phrygians, and Phoenicians positively denied. Even their one hundred thousand years observation of the stars was decided by these their competitors; for Babylon boasted of a four hundred

dred and seventy-three thousand years intimate acquaintance with the planetary system:

To whichsoever side we turn, then, on this very immaterial question, we have the most extravagant and the most contradictory systems to encounter. Many traditional fables contain particular truths, which it is sometimes possible to guess at, and which, in being known, become, in some respect, beneficial to mankind: but many of the wild tales of ancient story, possessing, as they do, nothing but heaps of absurdity and palpable untruth, should be negligently passed by; or, should they be deemed worthy of a thought, the reflection should uniformly occur, that the nations which have hitherto drawn our attention, are as much entitled to consideration and civility as the Egyptians. A Joog of the Hindoos is as readily to be believed,

believed, I should conceive, as the improbabilities that are so profusely scattered through the histories that are handed down to us of those children of Africa

BEFORE the mind of man was enlightened by divine revelation, no one of gratitude in a people could be more fastening, or more incentive to patriotic deeds, than the divine honours which were solemnly paid to the memories of those who in arts or arms had been serviceable to their country. It was a custom generally prevalent in the East. It found its way likewise into Egypt, but a transition theology soon drew from it another species of religion, which, instead of being a

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FRAGMENT LXXVII.

BEFORE the mind of man was enlightened by divine revelation, no one act of gratitude in a people could be more flattering, or more incentive to patriotic deeds, than the divine honours which were solemnly paid to the memories of those who in arts or arms had been serviceable to their country. It was a custom generally prevalent in the East. It found its way likewise into Egypt; but a monstrous theology soon drew from it another species of adoration, which spread with astonishing rapidity; I mean astrolatry or creature worship: and hence the Egyptian belief in the Indian Metempsychosis, and their practice of embalming their dead. “ So
“ Joseph died, being an hundred and ten
“ years

“ years old; and they embalmed him,
 “ and he was put in a coffin, in Egypt.”

And in an especial manner, hence their abomination of some animals, and their extravagant fondness of others; as their Apis, which, like the Hindoos, they looked upon with extraordinary veneration, being the symbol of agriculture.

The Egyptians, I am apt to believe, were far from deserving that infinite degree of respect which hath been given to them by ancients as well as moderns. They unquestionably were an informed people; but it is doubtful with me if they were entitled to that encomium which hath been passed upon them—that, like the Chinese, they derived a knowledge of the arts from their own abilities and sagacity, and not from the assistance or instruction of any other nation. That their vanity and unconquerable prejudices made them neglect the certain mode of

acquiring improvement, are points of which we now are well assured. They dreaded or detested maritime affairs in the first ages of their empire. Those of their own subjects, who ventured upon the troubled element of waters, they looked upon as devoted to the infernal gods; and with those of a foreign state they avoided all intercourse. They would not, at the social and unbending moments of conviviality, sit at table with a stranger: nay, so determined were they against all intercourse with aliens, that, to the destruction of commerce, that wholesome channel of introduction to arts, sciences, and refinement, their first kings excluded all strangers from their harbours; nor was it until the reign of Psammetichus, that their ports were opened, traffic encouraged, and that the merchant of distant climes met with that protection and regard which encourages the spirit and enterprize of trade.

But

But notwithstanding this repugnancy in the early Egyptians to sea affairs, the improvements which they made in that art, after it was authorised, were wonderful, if we may credit what Herodotus says — that Nechao, who reigned over that country six hundred and sixteen years before Christ, sent a float down the Red Sea, which, coasting along the shores of Africa, at length returned to Egypt through the Straits of Gibraltar, after a voyage of almost three years: a circumstance, if admitted, which takes a little from the eclat of Vasco de Gama, as the first navigator of the boisterous seas of the Cape of Good Hope.

In the various efforts of the genius of man, none have yet exceeded, or even gone so far, as the art of constructing vessels capable of transporting nations over the boundless deep, and its awful and at-

tendant sciences, which so accurately point out their destined track. They are wonderful, and, to the human understanding, most flattering subjects of contemplation. Observe the man, who, for the first time, is at sea; question him in what manner he conceives it possible to hit the direct road to the place you wish to arrive at, through the trackless ocean? What will he reply? He sees nothing but a boundless expanse. Speak to him of the compass; he comprehends not why the needle should invariably point to the north. Tell him of certain positions of the planets being the unerring means of directing you on your way, how is he to be convinced that, by the changeable position of stars, your situation can be ascertained with precision; or that the heavens above can have any sort of connection with the waters beneath? Amazement and uncertainty will, in reflecting, undoubtedly seize upon his

his senses: he will imagine nothing but what is bewildering, nothing but what, in his mind, must surpass the utmost extent of human comprehension.

That the Egyptians were not very able navigators, we may readily conclude from the simple circumstances mentioned in their history, of their floats and their coasting. They certainly were in the infancy of maritime affairs, when the voyage of Nechao, accidentally perhaps, took place; for to suppose that ship-building was in its decay at that time, as some writers have maintained, would be making a concession which cannot be demanded on any respectable authority. Homer, who certainly acquired a considerable portion of knowledge from the Egyptians, and who was sufficiently desirous, at every opportunity, of shewing his skill in naval affairs, thus describes

the ship built by Ulysses ; and, in the construction of which, Ulysses was even assisted by a divinity.

- “ Now toils the hero ; trees on trees o’erthrown,
 “ Fall crackling round him, and the forests groan :
 “ Sudden, full twenty on the plain are strow’d,
 “ And lopp’d and lighten’d of their branchy load.
 “ At equal angles there dispos’d to join,
 “ He smooth’d and squar’d ’em by the rule and line.
 “ (The wimbles for the work Calypso found)
 “ With those he pierc’d ’em, and with clinchers bound.
 “ Long and capacious as a shipwright forms
 “ Some bark’s broad bottom to outride the storms,
 “ So large he built the raft : then ribb’d it strong
 “ From space to space, and nail’d the planks along ;
 “ Then form’d the sides : the deck he fashion’d last ;
 “ Then o’er the vessel rais’d the taper mast,
 “ With crossing sail yards dancing in the wind ;
 “ And to the helm the guiding rudder join’d.
 “ (With yielding osiers fenc’d to break the force
 “ Of surging waves, and steer the steady course.)
 “ Thy loom, Calypso ! for the future sails,
 “ Supply’d the cloth, capacious of the gales.
 “ With stays and cordage last he rigg’d the ship,
 “ And, roll’d on leavers, launch’d her in the deep.”

ODYSSEY, b. v. p. 315.

Nothing more, to my mind, is required than this laboured description of Homer, to prove, that he neither saw nor acquired

quired a knowledge of maritime matters in Egypt, which can possibly convey to us an idea of their having been respectable navigators.

FRAGMENT

BOTH sacred and profane history contain such marvellous stories relative to Egypt, that a common man is as much at a loss how to reconcile them to the general nature of things, as he is to the principles of faith or probability. It will be our wisest way, therefore, to steer clear of every kind of contradictory discussion: it would afford us no satisfaction, would it stand: for

FRAGMENT

to the truth of such, which can stand but in imagination. Let it be sufficient for us to know, that the Egyptians were a very old, and a very respectable nation: that they remained long under the despotic government of their own kings; and that they afterwards fell under the

FRAGMENT LXXVIII.

BOTH sacred and profane history contain such marvellous stories relative to Egypt, that a common man is as much at a loss how to reconcile them to the general nature of things, as he is to the principles of sense or probability. It will be our wisest way, therefore, to steer clear of every kind of contradictory discussion. It would afford us no instruction; neither would it amuse; for, in the search of truth, fiction can afford but little satisfaction. Let it be sufficient for us to know, that the Egyptians were a very old, and a very respectable nation; that they continued long under the domestic government of their own kings; and that they afterwards fell under the subjection

subjection of the Persians, Greeks, Romans, and, finally, of the Mohammedans, under whose yoke they at present groan.

The national government of Egypt was, in many respects, similar to the Hindoo. Professions were hereditary: each had its allotted rank. The child necessarily fell into the same line of trade with the parent; nor could he, by any degree of merit, cast off a connection with the class into which he was born, nor raise himself to a superior rank in the state: a pernicious custom, as we have already observed, but a very general one in the East, from the very earliest accounts of time; and, to insure it the more, was probably owing the practice, which was not only allowed, but in many places enjoined, of the intermarriages of brothers and sisters. “ And
 “ Judah said unto Onan, go in unto thy
 “ brother’s wife, and marry her, and
 “ raise

“raise up seed to thy brother.” ^{HO} Isis and Osiris, you may recollect, were brother and sister : their story you shall have in another place.

This obstinate perseverance in old customs, and rigid tenacity in excluding children from embracing other occupations than those of their fathers, rendered any thing novel in Egypt, as in China, almost miraculous. Arts, sciences, every branch of knowledge, ran in one regular, invincible direction. Pride and self-sufficiency stamped their wisdom with an unimprovable degree of perfection. They fancied themselves, in every respect, more learned, and more accomplished than the rest of the world. The like persuasion they imposed upon the credulous, who are always the majority of mankind ; and thus they fixed a character, which it is even dangerous at this hour to call in question.

I would

I would not, however, be supposed indiscriminately to make light of all the manners and customs of the Egyptians. They unquestionably had many laws and many regulations which shew them to have been a sagacious and a humane people. One in particular tends so much, and, I had nearly said, so exclusively to their honour, that I shall mention it — I mean the compelling a false accuser to undergo the sentence to which the accused was liable, on proof of his guilt, even though such sentence might be death.

“ ——— Tremble, thou wretch,
 “ That hast within thee undivulged crimes,
 “ Unwhipt of justice: hide thee, thou bloody hand;
 “ Thou perjur’d, and thou simular man of virtue,
 “ That art incestuous: Caitiff, to pieces shake,
 “ That, under covert and convenient seeming,
 “ Hath practis’d on man’s life.”

SHAKESPEARE.

How admirably well apportioned was the *lex talionis* of the Egyptians! What villany so transcendent as the depriving a fellow

fellow creature of his existence, by bearing false testimony against him ! Can the crime of robbery, though committed under the utmost degree of sacrilegious guilt, or can even murder itself, be compared, in baseness, with the cool, deliberate assassination of an innocent man ? No. Necessity, or some direful passion, may be supposed the stimulants to the former of these acts ; but, in accomplishing them, the perpetrators run the fatal risk of death pronounced by law : whereas the hypocritical-faced monster, who, under the cloak of uprightness, cowardly aims at the life, property, and honour of another, hugs himself — (I now speak of modern times) — in the certainty of at least personal safety. — Shame to the pure stream of justice that it should be so ! — Shame to the humanity and goodness of our species, that the father, son, or brother, perhaps of an helpless family, shall suffer the

most ignominious capital punishment, for extorting a trifle to furnish those who are dear to him with the miserable, scanty necessities of life—and that the most atrocious of all miscreants, a perjurer, shall, under the severest censure of the law, be punished only with insignificant disgrace! A disgrace which no wretch will shrink from, who has driven honour and honesty from his breast! But the Egyptians were, if possible, still more attentive to the lives of their people in another ordinance, which enacted, that “ he who
 “ should neglect or refuse to save the life
 “ of a fellow citizen, when attacked, if
 “ it was in his power to assist him,
 “ should suffer a punishment as rigorous
 “ as the assassin.”

If the Egyptians were wholesomely severe, however, in all matters touching the safety of each other, they yet were relax in others, particularly in
 that

that which related to theft. They had a law, similar to the law of the Hindoos, which we have already animadverted upon, and which they were proud of quoting as a beneficial one, but which appears to me to have been erroneous in its first principle. It ran thus : — “ The names
 “ of all thieves shall be enrolled under
 “ a chief, and they shall carry to him
 “ every thing they shall steal.” Plausible reasons, I know, can be advanced for this levying of contributions by special permission. The Egyptians were casuists of ability on this subject, as the Hindoos are at this very day. They principally grounded their predilection for this custom on the possibility of recovering, by this means, the greatest part of what should have been stolen, especially as the law adjudged a third or a fourth part, I forget which, to the gang, as a ransom for the residue, which the culprits were bound honestly to return to the right owners.

Yet,

Yet, let Hindoo and Egyptian lawgivers,
 or Hindoo and Egyptian commentators,
 argue as they please, it will be difficult
 for any but a Machiavelian to believe, that
 the holding out a bait to the idle and
 wicked to plunder their neighbours, can
 be either publicly or privately advantageous
 to a state.

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FRAGMENT LXXIX.

AMONGST the great variety of fable with which the mythology of the Egyptians abounded, no one tale was so differently related as that of Isis and Osiris. Many were the conjectures relative to these celebrated personages. The generality fancied them to have been beings that really did exist. The speculative looked upon them as children of the imagination. Be that, however, as it may, probability seems to incline to their having been, at one time or other, the King and Queen of Egypt; that they were likewise brother and sister, and, as I said before, husband and wife.

In

In placing, in coupling, and in distributing the superintendancy of employments to their divinities, the ancients paid very little regard either to decency or to decorum. They made monsters of them, says a sensible writer on this subject; some they represented round, square, triangular, lame, blind; they spoke in a scurrilous manner of the amours of Anubis with the moon. Diana, they said, had been drubbed; Jupiter they brought in making his testament at the point of death; they made them fight and receive wounds. One, banished heaven, was obliged to keep flocks; another was reduced to the hard shift of masonry, and had not interest enough to procure his wages. One was a musician, another a blacksmith, and a third a midwife.

When we reflect on these extravagancies of the human mind, and that most of them could boast of an Egyptian origin,

the wonderful sagacity and wisdom of that people must, in some little degree, sink before us. Nor is the story of Isis and Osiris, whether legendary or true, capable of striking us with a much more flattering idea of their modesty and good sense. Isis and Osiris are said to have been the conjoint sovereigns of Egypt; that they were endowed with superior good qualities; that they civilised their people, introduced the arts of agriculture into their country; and that, from their extraordinary care and attention, they rendered their subjects happy.

While in the pursuit of these praiseworthy and glorious ends, Osiris is said to have turned his arms towards India; (remark, by the way, that Osiris is not the only Egyptian king whom history has handed down to us as penetrating into India;) and, while employed in that arduous undertaking, his brother, Typhon,

ungenerously took advantage of his absence, planned his destruction, and had him murdered on his return, his body cut into pieces, and distributed in different parts of Egypt.

Isis, disconsolate at the loss of her husband, had still sufficient authority to awe the murderers of Osiris. Care and expedition were used in collecting his remains: these she got together, (certain parts excepted, which were substituted by a consecrated representation, that gave rise to the use of the Phallus among the Egyptians) and had them solemnly interred. This last act performed, her son Orus, with a considerable army, took the field against his uncle Typhon, whom he discomfited in two pitched battles. Thus far probability takes the lead of fiction; but now comes the fable. Juno, in a fit of spleen or jealousy, quarrels with Jupiter for having Minerva by Latona, while she herself

had only produced one god, who was so ugly, that they were obliged to turn him out of heaven. She appeals to a synod of the gods, then comes down to earth and forms a monster, which Ovid calls Python; a serpent of a new species, whose enormous size became the terror of men. He had, as is reported, an hundred heads; and from his hundred mouths issued devouring flames, and howlings so dreadful, that he equally terrified both gods and men. His body — the upper part covered with feathers, and the hinder entwined with serpents, touched the skies. He had to wife Echidna, and their offspring was the Hydra, the Gorgon, Cerberus, the Sphinx, and, in short, all the monsters that were hatched in the country of fables. Typhon no sooner sprang from the earth, than he declared war against the gods. Frightened, they fled into Egypt, where they transformed themselves into different animals. Jupiter into a
 ram;

ram; Apollo into a raven; Bacchus into a goat; Diana into a cat; Juno into a cow; Venus into a fish; and Mercury into a swan. Jupiter, however, plucking up courage, pursues Typhon with a scythe. Typhon, turns short upon his antagonist, seizes him by the middle, and, wresting the scythe from him, cuts off his legs and thighs, carries him into Cilicia, and there shuts him up in a cage. Mercury and Pan, surprising his keeper, who is half serpent, half woman, (how invariably serpents and women are introduced together!) restore to him his legs and arms, and he then follows Typhon with his thunderbolts as far as Arabia, and thence into Thrace. There Typhon, recruiting his spirits afresh, rallies once more against his adversary, and, tearing up a mountain by the roots, darts it at Jupiter, who parries the blow. Typhon, however, at last retires to Sicily, and there is buried under Mount *Ætna*. Thus,

it has been said, every mountain that throws out fire, buries under it the unhappy Typhon, who is devoured by flames.

“Where Typhon, prest beneath the burning load,
“Still feels the fury of th’ avenging god.”

ILIAD, b. ii. v. 945.

But no character was ever more profigately drawn than that of the thundering Jupiter. He is represented as guilty of incest and adultery, passionate, chole-ric, and revengeful; and why this should be, it is not easy to comprehend, as he is mentioned in the annals of Crete, of which island, it is said, he was king, to have been courageous, prudent, a lover of virtue, and, in short, an example of all civil and military virtues.

That men were amorous in the days of Jupiter seems pretty certain, from their frequent and free allusions to love, and all

its

its train of consequences ; but what makes it appear more so amongst the Egyptians, at that time, was, the very singular attention and respect which they paid to the fair sex. Their queens had more honour paid to them, we are told, than their kings. Even in their private alliances, contrary to Christian practice, the husbands vowed to love, honour, and obey their wives. They plighted passive obedience and non-resistance in all things ; but how this was accomplished I cannot conceive, polygamy being tolerated and allowed to all orders but the order of priests. In other countries, where a plurality of wives hath been allowed, we have uniformly seen the husband to be paramount. Even in Tartary, where more liberty is allowed them than any where else — in Tartary, the women are subservient to men ; and, in the nature of things, where polygamy is in use, such must be the case. The Egyptians, however, we
 are

are given to understand, were an exception to this general rule. The priests might have brought them to it; for, being confined to one wife each themselves, they did not like, perhaps, to see their neighbours have an enviable advantage in that respect.

Love, according to the most ancient writers, was indisputably the first of gods, taken, indeed, in a physical sense; for, from the harmony and regular union of bodies, blended together in chaos, sprang all the productions of nature. The idea is certainly a pretty one. Every reader of feeling, whether poetically inclined or not, must acknowledge, that no divinity could be better entitled to pre-eminence: nor can naturalists, resting simply on the information of the ancients, entirely deny that the belief of such an attraction of parts was rational. The compounds which are constantly used in chemistry, exhibit

exhibit to us, who, it must be acknowledged, are a little better informed than the ancients, the amazing adhesive quality of certain bodies, to others of apparently different kinds. Let not my fair friends imagine, that, by love, I mean that sly, insinuating, wanton, little animal, called Cupid. He, dearly as his dispensations are cherished by some, was too devious in his ways, for the ancients to give him the first place in their physical empyreum. Love they accepted as the first principle of all things: they could rest themselves upon no other conceit. The creation was unrevealed to them in the manner it has since been revealed to us. From an ignorance of first causes, then, the Egyptians ran into the most extravagant degree of superstition. We shall, in the subsequent part of these remarks, mention a few of the many animate and inanimate objects of their adoration. For the present, we shall content ourselves

ourselves with noticing, that they had a multiplicity of gods — many thousands — the most famous of which was their bull, Apis. To the honour of this divinity, magnificent temples were erected. The veneration paid to him, while living, was excessive; nor was his corporeal death (for, like the Lama of Tartary, his soul never perished) less lamented. A general and most solemn mourning was always the consequence of the decease of that celebrated divinity.

FRAGMENT

FRAGMENT LXXX.

IT is a trite, but not an unwise remark, that, in the way of faith, the more impossible any thing is, the fitter it is to be believed. The herd of mankind is infinitely more apt to cherish the belief of things beyond the reach of its capacity, than those which are on a level with sense and common understanding. Had it not been, and were it not still, for this predilection to the marvellous, how could the leaders of the multitude have found it so easy a matter to impose upon mankind the wildest and most extravagant chimeras? That pride which is natural to the mind of man has afforded them weighty assistance in their pious endeavours. Even from the clown, upwards, every one wishes

to

to appear more wise and more knowing than his neighbour. Obstinacy and ignorance likewise bring in their aid. Start but the game, and heaven knows how blindly, and how eagerly, it will be followed.

Is it possible for any system to be more ridiculous than that of the Egyptians, and others of the ancients, who represented their divinities under the most whimsical figures? Once adopted, indeed, I will acknowledge the difficulty of eradicating puerilities, although the absurdity of them cannot be denied. Holy frauds must be deliberately upheld. Religion is the bond of civil society; and whatever it be, (unless sanguinary and persecuting) the suppression of its rites, or even an alteration of them, should be cautiously undertaken. The Egyptians, satisfied with their triangles and their squares, laughed at all the rest
of

of the world; and all the rest of the world thought them right in so doing, for they gave them the credit of superior wisdom. But the Egyptians were not singular in the geometrical proportions given by them to their gods. Many Christians have not been less preposterous. Mr. Barretti, in the Journal of his Tour through parts of Portugal some few years ago, mentions one of the sacred orators of that country, whose memory and works are held in the highest estimation. “ I
 “ opened one of his volumes,” says this lively writer: “ his name was Vieira; and
 “ chance directed my eyes upon the proem
 “ of a sermon, in which the perfections
 “ of the circular figure are pompously
 “ enumerated. After which he proceeds
 “ to tell his audience, that if the Supreme Being was to shew himself under any geometrical figure, it would
 “ certainly be the circular instead of the
 “ triangular, the square, the pentagonal,
 “ the

“ the decodecagonal, or any other known
 “ to the geometricians.” Now, can an
 Egyptian priest, who preached simply the
 doctrines of his forefathers, be classed in
 a more ridiculous light than this visionary
 of the Christian faith ?

It must be confessed, that superstition
 reigned more absolute in Egypt than in
 any other country. So strict were the
 Egyptians, so puritannical I may say,
 that they neither allowed of public shews,
 nor any other amusements : no plays,
 races, or other games. Even music they
 held to be pernicious, as it tended to ener-
 vate and soften the mind. The stories that
 are told of their superstitious weakness is
 almost incredible. You read of a father
 of a family, when his house is on fire,
 taking more pains to save his cat than to
 extinguish the flames : of the sufferers in a
 famine feeding rather upon each other
 than upon any of their sacred animals : of
 its

its even being less dangerous to murder a man, than to kill a cat, an Ichneumon, an Ibis, or a hawk.

In the review we have already taken of some very old nations, we have met with nothing so replete with monstrous absurdity ; and yet those nations, in the articles of sagacity and refinement, are not to be compared with the Egyptians ! But if any thing can still tend to heighten the Egyptian character, it is the account handed down to us of the religious rancour and hatred of the inhabitants of one district to those of another. In one spot, for instance, the goat was the object of adoration, and the sheep of common food : whereas, a few miles backwards or forwards, the system became reversed ; there the goat was slaughtered, and the sheep was worshipped. Thus the whole country exhibited the strangest and most

unaccountable perversions of the human understanding.

" ——— Egypt, mad with superstition grown,
 " Makes gods of monsters, but too well is known ;
 " One sect, devotion to Nile's serpents pays,
 " Others to Ibis, that on serpents preys.
 " Where, Thebes, thy hundred gates lie unrepair'd,
 " And where maim'd Memnon's magic harp is heard,
 " Amidst their ruins, wondrous to behold,
 " A monkey's sacred statue glows with gold.
 " Fish-gods you'll meet, with fins and scales o'ergrown :
 " Diana's dog's ador'd in ev'ry town ;
 " The dog has temples, but the goddess none !
 " 'Tis mortal sin an onion to devour ;
 " Each clove of garlic is a sacred power.
 " Religious nations sure, and blest abodes,
 " Where ev'ry orchard is o'errun with gods !
 " To kill is murder, sacrilege to eat,
 " A kid or lamb : — Man's flesh is lawful meat."

JUVENAL, sat. 15, TATE.

It would be idle to suppose that one corner of the globe can produce any of the human species more liable to superstitious impressions than those of another. We all undoubtedly came into the world with the same dispositions, the same propensities. Education alone gives us the bias,

bias, which afterwards determines who and what we are. But it is somewhat strange that Egypt should, in all ages, have manifested the strongest tendency to superstition. We have already instanced it, while their system of uncouth mythology existed. The enthusiasm they manifested, after the introduction of Christianity, was, perhaps, no less violent. They were the first to establish the worship of saints and reliques. Their rage for the monastic order was boundless. It is said, a third of the people betook themselves to the deserts. In short, they transferred the veneration and respect which they had been accustomed to pay to irrational divinities, to a Saint Anthony and a Saint Paul, and served them with a fervency of zeal equal to any thing they had shewn to even their immaculate Apis.

A nation so thoroughly blinded by superstition as the Egyptians, could not but

hold their priests in the highest estimation. We accordingly find that they were, in rank, second to kings. Their privileges and immunities were very great: their lands, like the lands of the Brahmins, were free from every sort of tax and impost. The priests, indeed, seem to have been careful to merit the pre-eminence of their situation; for they were learned, discreet, and correct in their carriage. Those of Heliopolis, in particular, were renowned for these qualifications, and for the great proficiency they had made in philosophy and astronomy. The most celebrated of the Greeks were proud of deriving instruction from them.

In almost every country it has been observed, that, at one time or other, the sacred books of religion have been cautiously kept in a language unknown to the vulgar. Egypt, therefore, was not singular in this respect. The mysteries of

her

her divine worship, together with the principles of her government, were detailed at large in a character illegible to all but those of the order of the priesthood; in the same manner as the Shanscrit of the Brahmins, in which the Beids and Shaafta are written,

We have already noticed some of the manners and customs of the Hindoos, which evidently bear a strong similitude to certain usages of the Levites; and the idea may still be carried farther, as “Moses was trained in all the learning of the Egyptians.” Smile at the hypothesis if you please; but I see no valid objection to Egypt’s being the medium through which the Israelites derived many of their principles (originally Hindoo) of legislation. Each of them had one high priest; an hereditary priesthood descending from father to son. They allowed not of any blemish or imperfection in the

beast they sacrificed ; were scrupulous about ablutions ; and would not suffer lepers to come within their city.

Were we so inclined, this analogy of customs might still be extended ; but more would be unnecessary. Each of them had strong-marked features, and a strong family resemblance. Whether, indeed, a relationship did subsist, I will not pretend to say. The sports of imagination, on subjects of this nature, I have already condemned in others ; it therefore is peculiarly incumbent on me to avoid splitting on the same rock. The fact is, the general practices of mankind are, and always have been, so exceedingly alike, that very little ingenuity is required to point out the sources whence, it may be conjectured, most of them have been drawn. It is only being a little attentive to dates, and the whole lineal descent may be accurately traced. Nature, however, has but
one

one voice. To her we are to look for this extraordinary similitude. She speaks universally the same language to all the children of men: they follow her impulses as their necessities, their dispositions, their situations, severally lead them. In consequence, they hit upon the same ideas; and, whether civil or religious, their customs will necessarily bear a resemblance to each other.

FRAGMENT LXXXI.

WE have, in a preceding fragment, remarked, that the custom of sacrificing animals was universally prevalent among the ancients. It was every where the mode of expiating the sins of the people, and of averting calamities from the land. The Egyptians were scrupulously observant of their sacrifices. It is more than probable that they taught them to the Israelites; for we find among them something like the origin of the scape goat, the laying of hands upon the head of the victim, loading it with imprecations, and praying the gods to divert upon it all the chastisements with which they might threaten Egypt. “ And Aaron
 “ shall lay both his hands upon the head
 “ of

“ of the live goat, and confess over him
 “ all the iniquities of the children of
 “ Israel, and all their transgressions in
 “ all their sins, putting them upon the
 “ head of the goat, and shall send him
 “ away, by the hand of a fit man, into
 “ the wilderness.”

The Egyptians, notwithstanding all
 their extravagance, had a belief in the
 immortality of the soul: nay, Grotius
 says, that, in the age of Joseph, no cer-
 tain footsteps of idolatry are to be dis-
 cerned in Egypt. They fancied, indeed,
 that the soul continued with the body so
 long as the body was preserved from cor-
 ruption; and hence, it is conjectured,
 arose the practice of embalming their dead.
 But if they believed in a future state of
 rewards, as well as punishments, why
 should they be desirous of being the means
 of withholding the souls of those, whose
 memories they revered, from the bliss
 which

which awaited them, when detached from their respective bodies? The conjecture does not appear to be a good one. Had the mummies been preserved by them on the same principle as the Romans kept the statues and pictures of their ancestors, the custom might have answered purposes of public, as well as of individual benefit; and such indeed might have been the case, as they were miserable sculptors as well as painters. But to confine the immortal parts of friends who might have been dear to them, and thereby to prevent their becoming partakers of the happiness of Elysium, was to be cruel and treacherous, and to no manner of purpose: or, taking it in another light, it was indirectly to declare, that the rewards of another state were not worthy the possessing. Probably, however, the truth is, that the practice of embalming arose from respect and veneration, and from a laudable desire that the bodies of
the

the worthy, and the beloved, should not sink into putrefecency, and, finally, into nought.

Posthumous reputation was peculiarly dear to the Egyptians. Nothing afforded greater consolation than the hope of leaving behind them a good name. It appears that they were tenacious in this respect, and that they were peculiarly attentive in discriminating the good from the bad, ere the praises of the public voice were solemnly bestowed. The trial of the dead among the Egyptians, was a remarkable trait in that people's character; and though it was not the fairest that could have been pitched upon, as malice might impute crimes, which could only be refuted by the accused when he was in being, yet it had so much the air of candour, that the Greeks, besides extolling it, vouchsafed to erect a religious fiction upon it, which bore

bore a most conspicuous place in their mythology.

A certain number of grave and upright men, holding their places for life, and not *durante bene placito*, were chosen as judges of this extraordinary tribunal. They held their courts on the banks of lakes, or other pieces of water: that of Memphis particularly, on the shores of the Acheron. Thither judges, prisoners, accusers, and defendants, were transported in a boat, the distinguishing name of the helmsman of which was Charon. The deceased were here brought to their trial. If, in the course of the evidence, it appeared, that, in defiance of the laws of the realm, &c. they had led bad or profligate lives, or had not discharged their just debts, they were then sentenced to a pit, or common shore, called Tartarus, which was adorned with the representations of a tortured Prometheus, Syphilus,

and Ixion : if, on the contrary, their memories appeared free from reproach, and no crimes of consequence could be established against them, they were, in such case, honourably acquitted. The form of absolution was curious ; it supposed the body to utter these words : — “ O
 “ Sun, thou first divinity ! and ye celestial gods, who gave life to man !
 “ vouchsafe to receive me this day into
 “ your holy tabernacles. I have endeavoured to the best of my power, to
 “ render my life agreeable to you : I have
 “ behaved with the highest veneration towards the gods with whom I was acquainted in my infancy : I have never
 “ failed in my duty to those who brought me into being, nor in natural affection to the parent that bore me. My hands
 “ are pure from my neighbour’s blood ;
 “ I have maintained an inviolable regard to truth and fidelity ; and may I not
 “ appeal to the silence of mankind, who
 “ have

“ have nothing to lay to my charge, as a
 “ sure and certain sign of my integrity?
 “ If, however, any personal and secret
 “ fault has escaped me, and I have offen-
 “ ded in eating or drinking, let these en-
 “ trails bear all the blame.” And here
 the entrails were exposed, and thrown into
 the lake by the relations of the deceased.

From this ceremony, not only Orpheus,
 who had travelled into Egypt, but other
 Greeks, drew their system of Elysium,
 Tartarus, Charon, &c.

“ ——— Charon, who rules the dreary coast :
 “ A sordid god : down from his hoary chin
 “ A length of beard descends, uncomb'd, unclean :
 “ His eyes like hollow furnaces on fire ;
 “ A girdle, foul with grease, binds his obscene attire.
 “ He spreads his canvass, with his pole he steers ;
 “ The freights of sitting ghosts in his thin bottom bears.
 “ He look'd in years ; yet in his years were seen
 “ A youthful vigour and autumnal green.”

ÆNEIS, lib. vi. DRYDEN.

Charon, according to the Greeks, was the
 ferryman of the river Acheron, which all

deceased

deceased beings were to pass. A surly, fordid, old fellow, and one who would always be paid beforehand; and hence the Greek and Roman custom of burying something with the dead; and hence, probably, the custom of the Muscovites at this day, who, besides a little cash, have an attestation to the following purport to produce: — “ I, the undersigned, “ A. B. Pontiff, do attest that C. D. “ was a person of a good life and conversation — Let his manes rest in “ peace.”

It would be wrong to quit this subject, without affording a word or two to the Macedonian,

“ Who left a name, at which the world grew pale,

“ To point a moral, or adorn a tale.”

JOHNSON.

and whose body was deposited in a coffin of gold in the burial place, built by himself

self for the sovereigns of Egypt, in Alexandria

“ To sacred rest his corpse was here consign’d ;
 “ His corps, that better had been toss’d and hurl’d,
 “ With just contempt, around the injur’d world.
 “ The prosperous robber.”

LUCAN, lib. x. ROWE.

From the coffin of gold it was removed to one of glass, in which it is said to have been found by Augustus Cæsar, who, viewing it with complacency and affection, adorned it himself with an imperial crown, and, emblematic of its innocence, bestrewed it with the fairest flowers. Alexander, we are told, on a similar occasion, acted in like manner towards Achilles. “ Arriving at Troy,” says Plutarch, “ he
 “ honoured the memories of the heroes
 “ who were there slain, with solemn libations. The grave-stone of Achilles
 “ he particularly anointed ; and then,
 “ according to ancient usage, crowning the
 the

“ the sepulchre with garlands, he ran
 “ naked about the tomb, singing, Happy,
 “ happy youth, who had Patroclus thy
 “ friend, and Homer to sing thy praise !”
 Achilles, indeed, himself had led the way
 in the honours he paid Patroclus. You
 remember the eulogium he is made, by
 the old Grecian bard, to pass upon his
 friend :

“ Oh ! guard these relics to your charge consign’d,
 “ And bear the merits of the dead in mind ;
 “ How skill’d he was in each obliging art ;
 “ The mildest manners, and the gentlest heart :
 “ He was, alas ! but fate decreed his end —
 “ In death a hero, as in life a friend.”

ILIAD, b. xvii, v. 753, POPE.

FRAGMENT LXXXII.

AN uncommon degree of extravagancy seems to have tintured every disposition of the Egyptians: they delighted in the marvellous. Their several manners and customs, as we have already shewn, had a peculiar tint. Even in their buildings, and other public works, they seem, in general, to have flighted grace, elegance, and symmetry. The enormous was the great object of their admiration. Pyramids, in the grand style, are only to be met with in Egypt. Small ones, indeed, are to be found in Hindostan. The periods at which the Egyptian pyramids were erected, and the purposes intended by them, are, and must ever remain, a mystery. They are of too remote antiquity

quity for a satisfactory investigation. The vulgar of Egypt were of opinion, they were the work of those mighty men who could mount Ossa in Pelion.

“ ——— And now,
 “ To seize the throne of Jove the giants move :
 “ Hills pil’d on hills, on mountains mountains lie,
 “ And thus they form approaches to the sky.”

OVID’S MET. lib. i.

Modern times, indeed, suppose, they were the ostentatious effects of human vanity ; that they were, simply, sepulchres erected for some six-feet sovereigns of Egypt. The coffin that was discovered in the largest of them, was sufficient evidence of the size of the body which had been deposited in it. A poor, insignificant lump of mortality, to be encased in a mass of building five hundred feet perpendicular height, and six hundred and ninety-three feet square ! — O man, man, how

F f 2 ridiculous

ridiculous art thou in the offsprings of thy pride !

M. Diderot, an elegant French writer, has conjectured that the pyramids were the Bibles of the Egyptians, antecedent to the invention of letters : that, by the means of hieroglyphics, they were the repositories of all the knowledge they had of the arts and sciences : but that time has effaced those characters, though the pyramids themselves, from the solidity of their figure, have resisted the destructive power of the elements ; but this conjecture, however ingenious, is too much in their own style. A readier, and a more commodious way of preserving their knowledge, must have presented itself. The priests could not have been without invention ; neither could they have been so thoughtless, when arrived at a perfection in hieroglyphic writing, as to submit what they and their successors were to derive
their

their credit from, to the destroying influence of wind, rain, and other external violences : nor can it easily be conceived, that a dignified and a proud order of people, such as the priesthood, and whose indispensable province it was, should like to study, in broad daylight, near the city of Memphis, on a burning, rocky soil, beneath the overpowering rays of an intense hot sun, to take no notice of the invariable mounting of between two and three hundred steps, and those of most difficult ascent. They were assuredly monuments, as were the Sphynx and the Catacombs.

In the same style with the pyramids, was the labyrinth built, according to Herodotus, by the twelve Kings of Egypt, and some remains of which are to be now seen near the town, called Caroon. After speaking of the purposes intended by this huge pile of building, Herodotus con-

tinues — “ Of this labyrinth, there are
 “ twelve faloons or covered courts, with
 “ gates opposite to each other; six to-
 “ wards the north, and six towards the
 “ south, in continued lines. They are
 “ furrounded by the same outward walls.
 “ The apartments are on two floors; the
 “ one under ground, and the other over
 “ them; three thousand in all; each con-
 “ sisting of fifteen hundred. Those be-
 “ low were made the sepulchres of the
 “ kings and the sacred crocodiles.”

But, the wonder of wonders in Egypt
 was the Lake Meris, or Mareotis. This
 lake, made by a sovereign of that name,
 and for the sole purpose of preserving the
 waters of the Nile, was computed at
 three thousand six hundred Stadia, or one
 hundred and eighty leagues round, and of
 the depth of about three hundred feet.
 Now, if we reflect on the size of this
 lake, and of the country of Egypt itself
 being

being barely five hundred and fifty miles long, and one hundred and twenty-five miles broad at its greatest width, the most infatuated must allow, that there is some little cause to suspect the ancients of a trifling exaggeration in their accounts: nor can we in candour, I should think, be denied the privilege of doubting them in their descriptions of the cataracts of the Nile — Tremendous columns! — Awful, thundering falls! — More loud and frightful than those of Niagara! when, by simple measurement, they have been ascertained (and they are rocks of granite crossing the river in three places, which form them, and which time cannot have altered) to be only twelve feet perpendicular at their greatest declivity.

The detection of errors in any accounts which are given as authentic, unavoidably throws a gleam of suspicion on every thing which is recorded in those accounts,

and which does not come immediately within the verge of probability. Thus the lakes and the cataracts make us incredulous as to other matters: for instance, what shall we say to this country's maintaining four hundred thousand fighting men?

“ All that proud Thebes' unrivall'd walls contain,
 “ The world's great empress on th' Ægyptian plain,
 “ That spreads her conquests o'er a thousand states,
 “ And pours her heroes thro' a hundred gates;
 “ Two hundred horsemen, and two hundred cars,
 “ From each wide portal issuing to the wars.”

ILIAD, b. ix. POPE.

Sesostris still exceeded this. His army consisted of six hundred thousand foot; twenty-four thousand horse; and twenty-seven thousand armed chariots; but Diodorus beats both accounts; for, he says, the inhabitants amounted to upwards of sixty millions: a number which could have well spared an army of twice the strength of Sesostris; and which, to have been

been preserved, must, according to political arithmeticians, have been recruited by ten thousand births every day. Europe, take thee together, thou dost not possess at this hour a population exceeding that of the land of Egypt in the days of Sesostris!

Before we take our leave of the Egyptians, however, let us do them the justice to say — and to their immortal honour be it remembered! — that they were the people, among those whom we call the ancients, who formed the first library. The tomb of Osmyandes, it is said, had one room in particular, attached to it, over the portal of which was inscribed, “The remedies of the soul;” and in it was lodged a choice collection of manuscripts and books. The famous library, called Ptolemy’s, consisted of seven hundred thousand volumes. Even in Cæsar’s wars, four hundred thousand volumes, in one collection,

collection, in Alexandria, were accidentally destroyed by fire. What pains and labour they must have cost, the art of printing being then unknown! In short, the Egyptians were justly celebrated for some of their laws, arts, and sciences; but they were not those extraordinary patterns of wisdom, elegance, and taste, for which they have been so renowned. What I have said of them, I have said with impartiality. As to pride, knavery, craft, and dissimulation, however they may have been accused, they possessed those qualities, perhaps, in no greater degree than their neighbours.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.



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C O R R I G E N D A

FOR

VOLUME II. RHAPSODIES.

- Page 29, line 9, dele *those*.
— 34, — 9, for *distinction*, read *distribution*.
— 154, — 5, dele *in*.
— 158, — 6, dele *then*.
— 213, — 11, before *tradition*, insert *the*.
— 272, and following pages, for *Iehan*, read *Jehan*; as
in the proper names, *Iehangire*, *Noor-Iehan*,
and *Shaw-Iehan*.
— 288, last line, for *fimitar*, read *scimitar*.
— 337, line 19, for *Gulifstun*, read *Gulifstaun*.
— 340, — 18, for *scaps*, read *scraps*.
— 344, — 11, after *this*, insert *it*.
— 352, note, for *Ayeer*, read *Ayeen*.
— 333, line 20, for *decided*, read *denied*.
— 435, — 4, for *in*, read *on*.

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